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THE
LAWRENCES OF THE PUNJAB

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Sir Henry Lawrence.

THE LAWRENCES OF THE PUNJAB

BY

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"THE GURKHA SCOUTS," ETC.



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TO
FIELD-MARSHAL
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL ROBERTS, V.C., K.G.

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NOTE

FOR the greater part of the material used in this biography I am indebted to Mr. R. Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, to the *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence* by Sir Herbert Edwardes and Mr. Merivale, and to Sir John Kaye's *History of the Sepoy War* and *Lives of Indian Officers*.

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INTRODUCTION

WHENEVER our thoughts turn towards the achievements of Englishmen in India, when, with a thrill of pride, we reflect that no nation can show a like array of men who have served a subject state so devotedly, when the names of those faithful servants fall in to the bugle-call of memory, the first to be told off are those of Henry Lawrence, who died the best-loved man that ever set foot in India, and of John Lawrence, his brother, who lived to win greater respect than has been granted to any other Anglo-Indian. The one "represented the poetry of Indian statesmanship," the other "its hard direct prose."¹

The story is unique in the history of brothers. The children of a poor soldier, the Lawrences raised themselves until they wielded power an emperor might have envied, and this position they attained, not by climbing over their fellows and thrusting them down, not by intrigue and trickery, nor by depreciation of other men's work and advertisement of their own, but by sheer merit, by inspiring and justifying confidence in their integrity and ability.

Henry Lawrence was born in Ceylon in 1806, John at Richmond, Yorkshire, five years later, and both were educated at a small school in the north of Ireland. Henry became a soldier in the service of the East India Company. In the popular mind the antithesis of the soldier is the clerk, the career selected for, not by, the younger brother,

¹ Captain Trotter's *Lord Dalhousie*, p. 62.

who also turned his steps towards the East, where he met with adventures of a kind more readily connected with the tales of Schehera-zade than with the actual experience of a middle-class Englishman in the nineteenth century; and *Jan Larens knows everything* was the verdict of the natives. The offer of an appointment in the Revenue Survey lured the soldier brother from his regiment, and, after filling an important political office throughout the Afghan War, he was sent to represent England in the kingdom of Nepal.

In 1846 a new country was brought under British sway—twenty millions of hardy fighting men, of warring sects, agreed upon one point only, the worship of success and strength. To keep the peace, to restore, or create, order and respect for the law, to encourage all that made for prosperity in a land where every man was armed, hoping to live, and expecting to die, by the sword—to do all this in the name of an infant maharaja, and hampered by the intrigues of the Sikh Council, was hardly a work suited to a committee. A ruler was needed; a tyrant, wise, strong, sympathetic, and single-hearted, and there was one man fitted for the task. Henry Lawrence was transferred from Nepal.

He ruled the Punjab, and the land had rest and peace. Round him he gathered and trained a brotherhood of assistants whose equal in the art of government the world has never seen, and of these subordinates the foremost was his brother John. Ability and force of character had brought together the soldier and the civilian to share in the most arduous and responsible work in the empire.

In due course came the need of a council, and the Board of Administration of the Punjab was formed after the annexation of the Sikh kingdom. Henry was president of this Rule of Three experiment, John his right-hand man, and—a coincidence too improbable to be approved in

fiction—in 1852 the other member of the board was a third schoolfellow from the Derry College.

The land prospered; the brothers were honoured, even loved, by the Punjabis, upon whom the fact had begun to dawn that the one aim of their rulers was the good of the people whom they governed. The sense of responsibility was strong upon the Lawrences, to God as to man. Heroes, demi-gods, were they in the eyes of the Sikhs, yet they were only two strong men of finer clay than most. Being human they could not see eye to eye, and each adhered to his opinion where convinced that the welfare of his people was at stake. It was no common-place quarrel that separated the brothers, each of whom loved and admired the other above all men—neither jealousy nor ambition, love of power nor greed of gold, but an honest dissension respecting the measures best calculated to promote the welfare of the millions whom they ruled and served. Both offered to resign, and the Governor-General declared in favour of the younger.

Sore at heart Henry left the Punjab to take up the reins of government in Rajputana, and once more he gave of his best to the service of mankind and of the God to whom his life had been consecrated thirty years before; and John ruled the Sikhs with wisdom, foresight, and courage, and—because he loved and honoured his brother—with an increase of sympathy.

John wreaked his vengeance upon the destiny that had placed the pen in his hand and withheld the sword, by creating an army of nearly one hundred thousand men, when the soldiers of the eastern provinces had turned against their masters. In the Punjab alone, where the name of *Jan Larens* was most trusted and feared, where the memory of Henry's kindness and sympathy was still powerful for good, there only could stout warriors be raised to march against the mutineers. As a statesman John

held the Punjab loyal; as a soldier he out-generalled the sepoy and wrecked their hopes.

Henry died when the prospect was darkest, loved and mourned with a depth of sincerity unparalleled in India. The younger brother surmounted all obstacles and triumphed gloriously.

THE LAWRENCES OF THE PUNJAB

CHAPTER I

(1806-1822)

BOYHOOD

The Lawrence Family — Henry's Schooldays — His Courage —
John at Foyle College and at Wraxhall—No Indication of
Future Greatness.

HENRY MONTGOMERY LAWRENCE was born at Matura in Ceylon on June 28, 1806. His father, Captain Alexander Lawrence, son of a mill-owner of Coleraine, had served with much distinction in India, but though twice recommended for promotion by the Commander-in-Chief, lack of influence had outweighed merit, and after a quarter of a century of fighting he returned to England a simple captain. Then his old colonel interceded and procured him a majority.

A sixth son, John Laird Mair, was born in Richmond in Yorkshire in 1811. Next year Major Lawrence was promoted to the command of a battalion in Guernsey, and throughout the Waterloo campaign he was in charge of the Ostend garrison. Broken down by wounds and ill-health he retired from the army with a pension of £100, one-third of the sum to which he was entitled by the rules of the service. Lord Harris, his former commander, made an attempt to secure to the veteran his rights, but Lord Palmerston, then Secretary to the War Office, "regretted that he did not feel at liberty" to advise the Prince Regent

to set aside the technical quibble that seemed likely to deprive one who had served the state so well of the means of sustenance for his family. Want of liberality was not one of the failings of the East India Company: though Colonel Lawrence had never worn its uniform he had fought its battles, and the Company made the battered hero a present of one hundred guineas and granted him a pension of £120.

That Colonel Lawrence had not prospered to the measure of his deserts was due rather to his virtues than to his failings. He was too blunt and straightforward to endear himself to men superior in rank and vastly inferior in character and mind, and upon this rock he had wrecked his chance of fortune.

Mrs. Lawrence was the daughter of the Rev. George Knox of County Donegal, a member of a family with which John Knox, the Reformer, was remotely connected. God-fearing, upright, and self-denying, she was not only a good woman but a good mother. She managed the large household with wisdom and thrift, and the lives of her children bear eloquent testimony to her virtues.

Letitia, the eldest sister, contributed largely to the formation of the boys' characters. They owed much to her wise love, and her influence for good continued after they had attained to high positions, for the men that controlled millions of their fellow-creatures were never ashamed to ask her advice and seek her approval.

Another refining influence was at work among the Lawrence children in the person of "Aunt Angel" Knox, a saintly woman, who made her home with them in Yorkshire during the years of Henry's childhood. In the year 1812 Colonel Lawrence's regiment was ordered to Guernsey, and twelve months later the household was broken up, the three elder brothers, Alexander, George, and Henry, leaving home for Foyle College, Derry, the school of which

their uncle, the Rev. James Knox, was headmaster, and under her brother's roof "Aunt Angel" continued her lessons of patience, humility, and charity during the greater part of Henry's life at Foyle College. She taught him the joy of giving—not out of abundance but by self-denial, not merely by the sacrifice of an occasional luxury, but by giving up that which might be held as necessary.

In time Alexander, the eldest boy, was nominated to the Addiscombe Military College by Mr. John Huddleston, a connection by marriage and a director of the East India Company; and in the summer of the following year, 1819, George, the second son, was dedicated to the same career. George and Henry rejoined their parents—now living at Clifton near Bristol—after an absence of six years. Before relegating George Lawrence to comparative obscurity in these pages, it may be mentioned that he also has a claim to be considered a "Lawrence of the Punjab," though the fame of the two most distinguished Lawrences has overshadowed that of their brothers. Of Colonel Lawrence's seven sons the first-born died in infancy, the fifth at the age of eighteen. The surviving five were all distinguished Anglo-Indians, who attained high rank in the military and civil services, and George became a power among the Sikhs and Mohanmedans of the North-West Frontier.

While Alexander, George, and Henry were at Derry, John had been a prisoner, condemned by an attack of ophthalmia to the close confinement of a darkened room. For twelve long months the vigorous and restless boy of six years of age was cut off from the main sources of boyish delights, dependent for a temporary escape from tedium upon the love and devotion of Letitia and of Margaret, the old nurse. In after years he used to declare that he would still be able at any time to distinguish from all others the feel of the hands he clasped in the darkness as he lay listening to their tales.

After George had left for Addiscombe, Henry was sent for a further twelve months' tuition to Mr. Gough's school in College Green, Bristol, and before long John, at the age of eight, was allowed to accompany the much-admired brother. On the top of Brandon Hill (separating Clifton from Bristol) the boys used daily to pass an old man, who was trying to exist by means of a trade, than which a more precarious can hardly be imagined—the sale of pin-cushions. Henry grew interested in him and often helped him out of his own small store, until the man came to be looked upon as a Lawrence dependant. When home on furlough after the war with Burma Henry continued to take an interest in the well-being of his old pensioner. "He never lost sight of any one in whom he had ever taken the slightest interest," said Letitia.

"I remember when we were both at school at Bristol," John wrote to Sir Herbert Edwardes,¹ "there was a poor Irish usher named Flaherty, and he had done something to offend the master of the school, who called up all the boys and got on a table and made us a great speech, in which he denounced poor Flaherty as 'a viper he had been harbouring in his bosom;' and he also denounced some one of the boys who had taken Flaherty's part as 'an assassin who had deeply wounded him!' I was a little chap then, eight years old, and I did not understand what it was all about; but as I trotted home with Henry, who was then about fourteen, I looked up and asked who the 'assassin' was who had 'wounded' the master. Henry very quietly replied, 'I am the assassin!' I remember too, in connection with this very same row, seeing Henry get up very early one morning (we slept in the same room), and I asked where he was going. He said, 'To Brandon Hill, to fight Thomas.' (Thomas was the bully of the school.) I asked him if I might go with him, and he said,

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 20.

‘ Yes, if you like.’ I said, ‘ Who is to be your second?’ Henry said, ‘ You, if you like.’ So off we went to Brandon Hill to meet Thomas, but Thomas never came to the *rendezvous*, and we returned with flying colours, and Thomas had to eat humble-pie in the school. Henry was naturally a bony, muscular fellow, very powerful; but that fever in Burmah seemed to scorch him up, and he remained all the rest of his life very thin and attenuated.”

In the summer of 1820 Henry Lawrence, then in his fifteenth year, entered Addiscombe College, his admission being also due to Mr. Huddleston. John remained at the Bristol school, whose master was apparently a disciple of Busby, for the future viceroy admitted that the only variation upon his daily flogging there was the memorable day upon which he was flogged twice.

Alexander and George had both received commissions in the cavalry; and before Henry had been long at Addiscombe a similar offer was made to him. Cavalry appointments—the chief prizes of Addiscombe—were within the gift of the Company’s directors, but the third son of Colonel Lawrence preferred to complete his course and take his chance of the artillery, lest it should be inferred that the Lawrences were afraid of the examination that had to be passed before admission to the scientific arm could be gained.

Several college incidents have been narrated by Sir Herbert Edwardes to illustrate Henry’s courage. On one occasion he came across one of the senior cadets in the act of reading a letter from Letitia, and the result may be guessed. The transgressor was by far the bigger and older, and as Lawrence would have died rather than have given in, the bystanders were obliged to stop the unequal combat.

This might have been expected of any hot-tempered lad, reared in a martial atmosphere and schooled in the

city of *No Surrender!* More characteristic of Henry Lawrence the great-hearted is the story of a quarrel with a younger and weaker comrade. This lad was remarkable among the other cadets for the unenvied possession of "a large blue swallow-tailed coat with gilt buttons," and on the way to church one day Henry laughed at the oddity. Mutual recriminations and the inevitable agreement to "have it out after church" followed the peculiarly irritating request for the maker's name. The stronger boy had time for reflection during the service. He was obviously in the wrong, yet, being abnormally sensitive, how could he avoid the fight without violating the school-boy code of honour? Would it not look better to fight first and apologise when he had proved he was no coward? It would not do; his mind was too clear to be misled by soothing casuistry, and no sooner was the service over than he strode up to his opponent, held out his hand, and manfully expressed regret.

"I was wrong and rude and in fault. Let us be friends," he said, and so it came about and the friendship endured, strengthened by a further tie. A little later the same youngster, Robert Guthrie Macgregor, saved Henry's life. Bathing in the canal Lawrence was attacked by cramp and would certainly have been drowned had not Macgregor risked his own life, after several others had failed, and brought him safely to the bank.

A third instance reveals the same courage in a new light. To be sneered at as a coward would not have been easy for a boy of his temperament to bear, but he could have had the satisfaction of proving the sneerer in the wrong in a very practical way. To arouse smiles of pity as an eccentric would afford no scope for retaliation. During the holidays he used to beg old clothes from his family and friends in order to help a lady whose poverty had aroused his ever-ready sympathy, and he was not ashamed

to carry the bundle through the streets of London. A little thing! but it must be borne in mind that Henry Lawrence was more than ordinarily thin-skinned, and that to the close of his career his greatest fault was his quickness to be wounded by ridicule and disapproval. Thirty-five years later Sir Henry Lawrence remembered this same lady in his will. "He never lost sight of any one in whom he had ever taken the slightest interest."

At the age of twelve John left Bristol for the uncle's school at Derry. Born in England, of Scoto-Irish parents, he combined the best traits of the three nationalities. In Henry's temperament the Irishman was the dominant partner; in that of John, English strength and Scottish caution prevailed, though the Irish blood would often show in outbreaks of boisterous humour. At the Bristol school he was known as *Paddy*; *English John* was his Derry name; and at both places the boys were wont forcibly to express their disapproval of the alien element.

Foyle College seems to have been given over to the military spirit, boarders and day-boys of course supplying the antagonists. In a field close at hand the former had constructed a fortress which they garrisoned at all possible hours, day and night, to prevent the disgrace of its occupation by the day-boy enemy. This nice point of honour furnished the needed excitement, as the night-guard could only reach its post *via* the dormitory windows, thus adding the masters to the ranks of their foemen, whereas the day-boys could more easily leave their homes and assemble without exciting suspicion. The combatants being Irish boys the struggles for possession were rough, and no doubt John Lawrence enjoyed them thoroughly.

After two years at Foyle College he was sent to Wraxhall School, near Bath, and here he distinguished himself by various feats of daring. On summer nights he would

contrive to enjoy a bathe in the stream by taking out the iron window-bar and scrambling down the pear-tree that was trained against the wall. Had he had the leisure and the opportunity John Lawrence would probably have achieved distinction in the Alps or at Wastdale Head.

A schoolfellow coveted the eggs of a certain swallow. " ' I'll get the eggs for you,' said John, and went straight to the chimney, and began to climb it inside. It soon became too narrow for his burly frame. ' Never mind, I'll get them yet,' he said, and at once went to the window. I and my brother followed him through it, and, climbing a wall twelve feet high, which came out from one end of the house and formed one side of the court, pushed him up from its summit as far as we could reach towards the roof. He was in his nightshirt, with bare feet and legs; but, availing himself of any coign of vantage that he could find, he actually managed to climb up the wall of the house by himself. When he reached the roof, he crawled up the coping-stones at the side on his knees, and then began to make his way along the ridge towards the chimney; but the pain by this time became too great for human endurance. ' Hang it all,' he cried, ' I can't go on,' and he had to give it up."¹

Neither Henry nor John was a keen cricket or football player, the schools they attended having failed to offer great attractions in the matter of games. Nor did they shine as scholars, and though an observer might, without much risk to his reputation for perspicacity, have hazarded the opinion that each of the boys would develop a character, strong, just, and sane, no one would have dared to anticipate their brilliant careers. One friend indeed attempted to soften for Letitia the blow of Henry's departure for India by the prophecy that he would live to be " Sir Henry," but he would hardly have been selected from the one

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 20.

hundred and twenty Addiscombe cadets as the one most likely to distinguish himself. He was certainly industrious, and of all studies mathematics most appealed to him. He was fond of walking and amused himself by surveying the country with an eye to its military adaptability. He tried to find out the reason of everything, weighing cause and effect, and this habit of mind may have had something to do with his apparent slowness. He was not content unless he understood where others preferred to learn by rote. His own opinion of his schooling was that "for my part my education consisted in kicks. I was never taught anything—no, not even at Addiscombe. The consequences are daily and hourly before me to this day." And when Letitia expressed regret that the teaching had been imperfect, he replied, "*Well, that's past; we can now teach ourselves.*"

John's opinion was less unfavourable.¹ "At school and at college I did not work regularly and continuously, and did not avail myself of the opportunities which offered for securing a good education. But I worked by fits and starts. . . . When I went to Haileybury I was a fair Latin and mathematical scholar, and a poor Greek one; but I had read a great deal in a desultory fashion, particularly of history and biography, and was generally for my age well-informed." In a conversation with Sir Herbert Edwardes he recalled a remark of Henry's made during the progress of the first Sikh War:² "I remember my brother Henry one night in Lord Hardinge's camp turning to me and saying, 'Do you think we were clever as lads? *I don't think we were.*' But it was not altogether that we were dull. We had very few advantages—had not had very good education—and were consequently backward and deficient. We were both bad in languages, and always

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 18.

² *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 29-30.

continued so; and were not good in anything which required a technical memory; but we were good in anything which required thought and judgment. We were good, for instance, in history. And so far from Henry being *dull*, I can remember that I myself always considered him a fellow of power and mark; and I observed that others thought so."

They had, however, no doubts concerning their home-training and its influence. The stern courage, the simplicity, and the high code of honour of the father were ever before them; the mother's self-denial and living religion inspired them, and to crown all they were blessed in having an elder sister whose strength of character and Christian sweetness had more effect upon their lives than any other influence of their environment. To the invalid couch of Letitia the boys came with their doubts and difficulties; her advice it was that guided them, and to her they wrote their inmost thoughts.

CHAPTER II

(1822-1829)

HENRY AT DUM-DUM

The Bengal Artillery—Padre Craufurd—War with Burma—
Invalided Home—Honoraria Marshall—The Lawrence Fund.

WHILE John was still a day-boy at the Bristol school, Henry passed the Addiscombe examination for a commission in the Bengal Artillery and prepared to follow his elder brothers to India. Colonel Lawrence had resolved that none of his sons should enter the king's army where his services had been so shabbily requited; and it was to India that he looked for a future for his boys.

The separation was peculiarly hard for Letitia in whose heart Henry held the foremost place; and imaginative as the young soldier was, the glamour of the East and the prospect of adventure failed to deaden for him the pain of parting. Had any other career offered he would willingly have remained at home, but poverty urged the step. Colonel Lawrence was weak and ailing; in spite of the frugality and self-denial of Mrs. Lawrence the resources of the family were sorely tried, and Henry was fired by the thought that both Alexander and George had already been able to send home a portion of their pay. Such aid the colonel had at first been unwilling to accept, knowing by experience the expense of living in India, but his wife had wisely reasoned that, "It is good for the boys that they should begin life with denying themselves and helping others." So Henry Lawrence at the age of sixteen went out into the world, his ambition being to help those he

loved, his fate to win eternal fame and, what was still more precious to him, unequalled love.

During the outward voyage a warm friendship was formed with John Edwards, a cadet of the same corps, and on arrival at Dum-Dum, the artillery headquarters, a few miles north-east of Calcutta, the two youngsters decided to share a bungalow. The first letters home showed that the new duties were being taken up with zeal, and this enthusiasm for the artillery Henry Lawrence never lost. Though destined to be taken from his regiment for staff and political duties, he remained loyal to his first love, and even when ruler over many cities he was most happy when helping to serve the guns.

In spite, however, of his attachment to the artillery, Lieutenant Lawrence made an attempt to exchange into the cavalry, that the increased pay might enable him to send home larger remittances, but his application was not successful. He continued to live frugally and, abstaining from costly pleasures, worked hard at his profession, and made a special study of historical and military works. Chess became his favourite pastime, though he was not naturally an adept at it, and a sketch drawn by one of his chums illustrates at once the hot temper of the lad and the recognition by his comrades of his real goodness of heart.

“ ‘ For the fun of it,’ ¹ says one of his antagonists, ‘ when we saw checkmate on the board, we began to draw back our chairs as if preparing for retreat. Lawrence would perceive this, but say nothing, till the winning party made the fatal move and rushed to the door, saying, “ Checkmate ! ” when Lawrence, half in anger, half in jest, would often send the board after him. On the other hand, when he won a chance game from a superior, he hastened to say, “ You play better than I do.” And from studying the good and bad moves of others, he shaped out for himself

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, pp. 37-38.

ere long a skilful style of play, much beyond the promise of his commencement. I mention this,' says the narrator, 'because much of what he acquired in after life was by the same patient practice; an emulous observation of what was right, or careful avoidance of what was wrong, in the ways and means by which others worked.' "

His first chums, Lieutenants Edwards and Ackers, were soon obliged to leave Dum-Dum by ill-health. He was next attracted by Lieutenant Lewin, an old Addiscombe friend of one of his brothers, concerning whom he wrote to his sister, "It is really wonderful to me to see the conversion of Lewin, having known him as a worldly-minded lad. His whole thoughts now seem to be of what good he can do. I only wish I was like him."

The friendship of Lewin brought him into closer touch with one destined to wield a much greater influence over his character, "Padre" Craufurd, the junior chaplain of the old church at Calcutta, to whom Lewin's conversion had been due, and through whom the artillery station had become a kind of Christian headquarters in India. Mr. Craufurd had gathered round him, at "Fairy Hall," a little band of officers, and Lawrence was now persuaded to take up his quarters with these "Methodists."

Abhorrence of hypocrisy made him cautious in the profession of religion, and his reserved and retiring nature would not permit him easily to lay bare his heart. He joined in the services at Fairy Hall, but would never consent to pray aloud, and he rarely took the sacrament at Dum-Dum. "What I want to be assured of," he one day observed to Mr. Craufurd, when discussing the Bible, "is that this book is God's. Because, when I know that, I have nothing left but to obey it."¹

The first occasion on which he opened his heart to the chaplain, whose influence, though apparently so slow to

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 47.

work, was to increase and endure, was the result of an accident. Lawrence had bought a vicious pony that had already done its best to kill him. In spite of one narrow escape and of the warnings of his friends, he persuaded the "Padre" to drive behind it to visit some brother officers. The buggy was upset in a ditch and the occupants were stunned; and contrition for his rashness in risking the chaplain's life impelled him to speak with less reserve than ever before, and mutual confidence was established.

The impression made on the young man by Craufurd's friendship and example became more and more marked. He had never ignored his faults of hasty temper and a too great sensitiveness, but now he felt impelled to wage more strenuous war, and he was no longer alone in the fight. Mr. Craufurd's influence leavened his whole life, with the result that no humbler man ever served in India than he whom Sir John Kaye has termed "The Christian Warrior."

Henry Lawrence was eighteen years of age when, on the outbreak of war with Burma, he was placed in charge of six guns and one hundred men, under orders for Chittagong. The Burmese had been gradually encroaching on their neighbours until stayed by British territory. Then ensued a series of insults and annoyances, endured with patience and even humility by the English. In 1811, the King of Burma demanded the extradition of a political refugee who had found asylum in Chittagong, and this being refused, he laid claim to Chittagong itself, a territory that had never known the sway of the Ava court.

The pains taken by the Governor-General to explain the true position of affairs, and the patience with which the policy of insult was borne, had not tended to deter the Burmese from their purpose. In their ignorance they were persuaded that no motive other than fear could have inspired so apologetic a tone. Page after page of modern Indian history tells the same story—state after state

absorbed, campaign followed by campaign, in direct consequence of the Company's attempts to avoid the heavy expense of war, and of its dread of every accession of responsibility. Men of the Lawrence and Nicholson stamp preferred to thrash the evil-doer, without malice on either side, for the first offence, rather than lure him to destruction by displaying too obviously a desire for peace.

The Burmese began hostilities by seizing a British post and killing a number of the garrison. Their next step was to annex Bengal *by proclamation*.

Serving his guns in Burma for nearly two years Henry Lawrence had many opportunities of proving his worth. At an early period of the campaign he was ordered to take charge—over the heads of three senior officers—of an embarkation of guns and stores, because his zeal and activity and his readiness to take guns over any impediment had quickly attracted notice. "Ah," said the brigadier on another occasion, "if Mr. Lawrence had been there he would soon have got them over." Wherever he went and whatever he did, men had confidence in him.

The war over he returned to Dum-Dum, to Mr. Craufurd's house, with a reputation as a zealous and able soldier, and a fever more easily acquired in the swamps of Arracan. Padre Craufurd sent the lad to bed at once and nursed him, and though his sound constitution pulled him through, the fever clung to him and harassed him for the rest of his life. There was little chance of recovery at Dum-Dum, so he went first to Penang and thence to Canton, and as these changes of climate did not restore his health he sailed for home. The voyage probably saved his life, but he was never more the robust fellow of old—his father's "grenadier."

The appearance of the returned warrior, gaunt and sunken-eyed, was a shock to those who loved him so dearly. That the change was great is shown by an entry in Mrs.

Lawrence's journal:¹ "Returned from Arracan, my dearest beloved Henry Montgomery, not twenty-one years old, but reduced by sickness and suffering to more than double that age." Then follow these words—not from a mother blind with partiality, but from one who was never lenient to her children's faults: "Self-denial and affection to his whole family were ever the prominent features of his character."

Soon was given a striking proof of the influence of Padre Craufurd. Before Henry had been many days at Clifton he asked Letitia's opinion on the subject of family prayers. She advised him to propose the innovation, well appreciating the delicacy and difficulty of the task for a young man in his own family, but sure of the parental consent. So he brought out the Bible Mr. Craufurd had given him and said, "Mother, suppose we read a chapter?" Permission being readily given, he next suggested that the servants should be invited. Here acquiescence was less prompt, but the bell was rung, they were invited to join, and family prayers became an institution of the household.

His furlough was not regarded as an unmixed blessing by his younger sisters. Though there was no lack of love and admiration for their "dear pedagogue brother," his endeavours to increase their stock of knowledge must have been embarrassing. He himself never tired in the acquisition of knowledge, his energy requiring him to learn the why and wherefore of everything he saw; and his good-nature and readiness to help over the stile every lame dog he encountered—the dog being, perhaps, perfectly comfortable on the wrong side—forced him to drag his friends along the road up which he thought they ought to go. So the poor girls had to submit, and no doubt they profited by his admonitions and loved him more and more.

The delight he had in teaching and training was one of

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 84.

the prominent traits of his character, and in an ordinary man might have been offensive, but the zeal of Henry Lawrence could never be mistaken for an occasion of display. He was always the fellow-seeker, not the superior person showing off his accomplishments. It is then hardly surprising to find him devoting some months of his holidays to a more thorough study of his profession. An opportunity of working with the Trigonometrical Survey in the north of Ireland was offered in the fall of the year 1828, and though the malarial fever refused to be shaken off, its attacks were growing less frequent and less violent, and he grasped this chance of learning something new. Not, perhaps, a knowledge necessary to a gunner, but still knowledge, and perchance the accomplishment might stand him in good stead.

While at Clifton the eloquence of the Rev. Robert Hall attracted his notice, and with Letitia and John he made many a journey over Brandon Hill to the Baptist chapel in Bristol. The sister being delicate, the brothers used to make a chair of their clasped hands, and so carry her over the hardest bits of the road.

A visit from Letitia's friend, Honoria Marshall, brought a new interest into his life. They met again, in Ireland, and he began to understand that he loved the charming and gracious girl. He opened his heart to Letitia in this as in everything, and she knew not what advice to give. They were both young, and he was a poor man. He assured himself that she was much too good for him, and that to expect her so to stoop was a dream beyond hope.

Again they met, this time in London where Miss Marshall was staying with her friend, Miss Heath, and though he tried to persuade himself that the desire of the moth for the star was hardly more irrational than his own longing, his sister soon became aware, by his continued interest in her friend's affairs, that he had not entirely given up hope.

Letitia disclosed all she knew, mentioned the books Honoria read, and assured him that religion had had an important part in her upbringing. The exacting worshipper was satisfied with the report—yet how could it concern him! Even if the miracle should happen and he should find favour in her eyes, ought he to think of marriage? His father could not last much longer; the pension died with him, and the mother and sisters would then be penniless, save for the contributions of the sons in India.

Perhaps these reflections led him to the idea that presently took shape. John would soon be a wage-earner, and might it not then be possible for the four brothers—without prejudice to the contributions they were already sending home—to combine, and set aside a fund for their mother's use? John approved, and the "Lawrence Fund" became a reality.

CHAPTER III

(1827-1833)

JOHN ENTERS THE CIVIL SERVICE

Self-Conquest—Haileybury College—The Brothers sail for India Together.

JOHN LAWRENCE remained at Wraxhall School until his sixteenth year, when, to his dismay, he learned that his father had fixed upon the Indian Civil Service as the career that offered him the best prospects. John was a soldier to the backbone and a true Lawrence. "A soldier I was born and a soldier I will be," he asserted, standing out against the family's decision.

This civil appointment had also been offered by the same Mr. Huddleston who had given Alexander, George, and Henry their chances in life, and the youngster determined to beg him to change the gift for a cavalry commission. He had been reared on stories of campaigns, sieges, and stormings, and no dream of any save a military life had ever crossed his mind. Colonel Lawrence tried to shake the lad's resolve by reminding him of his own hard case, his poverty, wounds, and loss of health. John pointed out that the three elder brothers were doing well in the Company's service.

Henry had arrived on the scene in time to take part in the discussion. The young lieutenant, home after two years' service, and already marked by the observant as a man upon whom to rely, was appealed to by both sides. Without hesitation he cast his vote for the civil service. Red

tape, he said, was ruining the army; the seniority system was filling the higher positions with incompetents and blocking the advance of the capable and zealous. The fool was as likely to climb as the man of genius—in some respects the path would be easier for him. But the civil service demanded the best men, provided scope for their ambition, and offered greater opportunities of doing good. Much as John respected the opinion and admired the character of his brother, he remained unconvinced.

He gave way at last as he sat by the couch of Letitia. Her influence with him was almost as great as with Henry, and he looked up to her with equal love. Among other inducements she pointed out that he would at once earn a bigger salary in the civil service. A sordid motive! Not when such a prospect loomed before him—an aged mother and helpless girls absolutely dependent on the money sent home by the sons and brothers in India.

He quietly crushed his ambitions and, facing the sacrifice bravely, set forth in July 1827 for Haileybury College, the training ground for the East India Company's Civil Service, and Henry went with him to coach him for the preliminary examination.

A story typical of the "pedagogue brother" is told by Mr. Bosworth Smith. Before the examination took place Henry endeavoured to instil into the reluctant mind information upon certain points which his experience of India had taught him to regard as important for aspirants to the civil service. John was less willing to receive than Henry to give—and who does not sympathise with the boy of sixteen! A looker-on, anxious for the prospects of the son whom he had brought upon the same errand, observed that the elder brother's sowing was not upon willing soil, and begged him to transfer a little of the seed to his own son. Ever ready to be of use Henry gladly took the stranger in tow, with the result that as these very subjects

did occupy an important place in the question list, his new pupil came out of the ordeal better than did John, and attributed his good fortune mainly to Lawrence's advice.

John remained two years at Haileybury and by his own account was "neither very idle nor very industrious." He won prizes for history, political economy, and Bengali, but it cannot be said that he showed promise of a brilliant future, and he was by no means regarded as one who would do great credit to the college or to the able staff that ruled its destinies. Indeed, his friend Hallet Batten, son of the Principal of Haileybury, was occasionally reproved by his father for "loafing about with that tall Irishman instead of sticking to the more regular students."

John's revenge was effective. He finally came out in front of young Batten, and in reply to the Principal's good-humoured congratulation, "Oh, you rascal, you've got out ahead of my son!" John gravely observed, "Ah, Dr. Batten, you see it's all *conduct*; I fear Hallet has not been quite so steady as I."¹

Thirty years later when all eyes were fixed upon John Lawrence, who, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, was raising armies greater than any he would have commanded had he become a soldier, Mr. Hallet Batten chanced to be home on furlough. He visited Dean Le Bas, who had been Professor of Mathematics when John was at Haileybury, and the old man asked:—

"Hallet, who is this John Lawrence of whom I hear so much?"

"Don't you remember?" Batten replied, "a tall thin Irishman with whom I much consorted, who once kept an Irish revel of bonfires on the grass-plot, and whom you forgave on account of his Orange zeal and his fun?"

"Ah!" said the Dean, "I remember the man; not a bad sort of fellow." He then laughed aloud and drily

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 26-27.

inquired, "But what has become of all our *good* students?"

By the time that John had completed the Haileybury course, Henry's furlough was nearly ended, and the brothers arranged to sail together. To Mrs. Lawrence and Letitia the intervening weeks passed rapidly, and their hearts were sore at the prospect of another parting. One by one the youngsters had left the nest, but custom could not blunt the keenness of the mother's distress. The younger brother had the wonders of the marvellous East before him, but the elder had tasted of the strangeness and had learned to value his home the more, and the parting was harder for him. Moreover, Henry knew that his father was sinking and that he could not hope to see him again; and his love for Letitia had grown in intensity while he had been at home. Correspondence had been a poor substitute for the companionship, for which absence had made him long, and now, the realisation having exceeded the expectation, he was loth to go. Also, he was leaving Honoria Marshall, as he thought, for ever.

The boat sailed on September 2, 1829. John, never a good sailor, was so ill that his life was in danger. For six weeks he could not even leave his berth, and the common study of the native languages, planned for the voyage, had to be abandoned.

The brothers parted at Calcutta, John being obliged to remain at Fort William until he had passed an examination in the vernacular, while Henry journeyed north-west to Kurnal on the Sikh frontier. Here he joined his new company of artillery, and here was also stationed the 2nd Cavalry, the regiment of which George Lawrence was adjutant. For eighteen months Henry lived with his brother, and his time was divided between professional duties, study of the languages, and exercise in the cavalry riding-school. He was continually on horseback, not only

because he loved the exercise, but also because he had the foresight to equip himself for the future. Unsparing of himself, he was as good a horsemaster as a horseman. In a letter to his favourite correspondent he speaks of his Arab: "I take so much care of him that I suspect he will die. That he may come in cool I always walk him the last three or four miles, and as I walk myself the first hour, it is in the middle of the journey that I get over the ground."

Towards the close of the year 1831 he was transferred to a troop of the horse artillery at Cawnpore. In the opinion of the officers stationed in that town Henry Lawrence was unsociable. To a man of his temperament, sensitive and overflowing with kindness and affection, the knowledge that he was so regarded must have been painful. The study needed to master the details of his profession kept him to some extent apart, but the reserve arose mainly from a resolve not to waste a penny that might be devoted to the "Lawrence Fund," of whose existence only Letitia and the brothers knew. Alexander, George, and John were denying themselves equally for this purpose. But though considered unsociable he won respect. The officer of the horse artillery, from whose statement this opinion is taken, adds that, "In case of a row or dispute, I am inclined to think that all of us young officers would have deferred to his decision."¹

The day for testing his proficiency in Hindustani came round within a week or two of his twenty-sixth birthday. Such an ordeal must have been more trying to the nerves of Henry than to the more phlegmatic nature of John. In a letter to Letitia the former admits the nervousness, though sure of passing, "but the little bit of pride that you have held up as an unbecoming feature in my moral visage would be sorely touched by a failure."

He did pass, and was recommended to the notice of the

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 108.

Commander-in-Chief in terms of strong approbation. He obtained the post of interpreter and, a few months later, through the intervention of his brother George, he received an appointment as assistant revenue surveyor in the North-West Provinces.

CHAPTER IV

(1830-1838)

JOHN AT DELHI

As District Officer—" John Lawrence knows Everything "—
His Strength, Resolution, and Resource.

WE left John Lawrence, in his nineteenth year, at Fort William, completing his studies. The voyage and change of climate had not agreed with him, and he longed to be back in England. Having sufficiently mastered both Urdu and Persian he applied for work, and the field for which he expressed preference was Delhi, the real capital of Hindustan. In the light of his later achievements, no surprise will be felt that he should have chosen a district in which the work of the Company's servants was both hard and dangerous. In no other spot would he have been able to learn so much; and in after years the choice proved fortunate for England.

The request being granted, he became " assistant judge, magistrate, and collector of the city and its environs." The average district contained more than two thousand villages, and the " Head of a District "—as the " Magistrate and Collector " is termed—governs a territory larger and more populous than most English counties. A group of districts forms a division controlled by a Commissioner, who is the local representative of the Lieutenant-Governor. As one of the assistants to the officer in charge of the Delhi Territory, the boy, who a few months ago had been subject to his college rules and bounds, now helped to control a

kingdom with a population of more than half a million and an area of eight hundred square miles.

Fortunately Delhi was not administered by Regulations. Freedom of action and plenty of scope for the strong man gave the young civilian what he wanted. *Men*, rather than *measures*, were needed; men of the right stamp, for the Oriental understands the one and not the other. Rarely can an Englishman estimate in true proportion the clashing interests, the immovable and seemingly incomprehensible prejudices of the conflicting races, creeds, and castes that form the Indian communities. General measures, adopted in Bengal in accordance with ideas of Western progress and reform, had been found to enrich the small minority and do harm to the majority. And all this with the best of intentions. Neither regulations nor decrees of the Governor-General in Council could do so much as the personal influence of the small army of magistrates, collectors, and similar officials, who had the heart, the brain, and the will to understand and sympathise with those under their charge. The native of Hindustan is apprehensive of the exercise of authority—rendered so by centuries of oppression—and incapable of grasping the idea (except when aided by a personal knowledge of, and confidence in, the official placed over him) that his rulers should, with no ulterior motive, trouble to labour for his good. So he refuses to assist in their inquiries, actively or passively frustrating all attempts to lay bare the truth under the impression that the less his rulers know of his affairs the less will he suffer. The more unscrupulous of the native officials and police, and of educated natives generally, take advantage of the situation to attain their own ends, by urging as the views and wishes of the people those measures most profitable to themselves.

Given ability, energy, and conscientiousness—qualities by no means rare in the Indian Civil Service—the man on

the spot can probe the hearts of his people and remedy many evils. The work was exacting, but well suited to the taste of John Lawrence. Before long the chief men in his district would gather round the new sahib in the evening and unfold the stories of their lives, opening out with more and more confidence until he knew their virtues and vices and understood their ways of reasoning better than the average civilian of thrice his length of service. After four years in Delhi he was transferred to Paniput in the northern division of the same territory, and two years later he was placed in charge of the Gurgaon district as acting-magistrate and collector.

The many-sidedness of a collector's duties—"a kind of terrestrial providence" over some half million members of widely-differing races, creeds, and castes—has been thus summed up by a writer in the *Calcutta Review*. The collector must be "publican, auctioneer, sheriff, road-maker, timber-dealer, recruiting-sergeant, slayer of wild beasts, bookseller, cattle-breeder, postmaster, vaccinator, discounter of bills, and registrar," besides performing duties incapable of classification. Part of the work must be done indoors, in the unbearable *cutcherry*, but the greater portion out in the open, *on the spot*. Here John Lawrence learned to rely upon himself, and he was on occasion able by force of character alone to overawe a whole community of sympathisers with murder. In common with his brother and John Nicholson he had the rare gift of power to compel men to obey him against their inclination and often against their interests.

In speaking of the youthful days at Paniput he once said:¹ "In those days I met with many curious adventures, and on some occasions was in considerable peril of my life, but good fortune and careful management combined brought me successfully out of them all." In later years

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 55.

his children would crowd round him to demand the Sunday budget of stories of these stirring times, of the righting of wrongs, the tracking of evil-doers, the breaking up of Thug and Dacoit bands, of narrow escapes from man and beast. Mingled with the heroic would be more peaceful tales, full of quiet humour, treating of the exploits of his favourite dogs and horses—the only extravagances in which he ever indulged. “Chanda,” his favourite horse, cost him his all, two thousand rupees, a sum refused at first by the dealer, who demanded three thousand and, contrary to Oriental custom, would not budge. Unable to raise so much, Lawrence turned away, but the longing for the horse gave him no rest. He tried again, this time with the money in two bags, and as the sight of the silver was not to be resisted, Chanda became his. The Arab soon proved his worth. Riding hard across country one night Chanda pulled up short and refused to respond to the spur. He had stopped on the brink of a tank thirty feet deep.¹ Lawrence was in the habit of keeping the horse loose in the tent and he used to tell how the natives on entering would first make their salaam to him and next to Chanda.

Fifty years after his removal from Paniput the men of the district would talk of his prowess and courage and amazing strength; and tales are still told to the children’s children of *Jan Larens*, the demi-god, the hero in the Homeric sense, the incomprehensible sahib who could get the better of the wiles of their forefathers by simple adherence to the truth.

By showing himself their master he was able to gain the warm approval of men to whom strength and daring most appealed, who used to confide to the sahib their regret that the days had gone by when “the buffalo belonged to him who held the bludgeon.”

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 53-54.

The following description of John Lawrence at Paniput has been given by his friend Mr. Charles Raikes:—

“ He usually wore a sort of compromise between English and Indian costume, had his arms ready at hand, and led a life as *primus inter pares*, rather than a foreigner or a despot among the people. Yet a despot he was, as any man soon discovered who was bold enough or silly enough to question his legitimate authority—a despot, but full of kindly feelings and devoted heart and soul to duty and hard work. . . . ‘ *Jan Larens*,’ said the people, ‘ *sub janta*,’ that is, knows everything.”

The previous collector of Paniput had not been very capable, and the natives had evidently imposed upon him. An energetic and resolute administrator, coming after one who was lax, must inevitably have an uphill task; and the Jats and Mohammedans sighed for the easy-going predecessor, who had been less hard on evil-doers. “ — Sahib is gone,” said a fakir, “ and everybody regrets him; for one, Larens Sahib, has come in his place, who is quite a different sort of man.”¹

The collection of revenue was, naturally enough, resented. Englishmen even are not yet educated to a cheerful acquiescence in this respect, though taxes may not be demanded at the bayonet’s point. In the old days the men of Paniput would pay whenever their rulers were strong enough to enforce payment, and unless force *was* brought to bear they could see no adequate reason for the sacrifice. The new collector resolved to make the attempt to do without the employment of force except in a passive sense.

One night he and his police surrounded a walled village whose inhabitants had persistently refused to pay. At dawn the village lads began to drive the cattle to the pastures, and were turned back with the news that Larens

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 52.

Sahib could not allow their cows to graze on the government's pastures until the land-tax was paid. Nothing further was done; the police squatted on the tracks leading from the village, and smoked and discussed the new sahib and his curious ways, and wondered if the village would give in. The village elders were astounded; under the old rulers there had been no lack of variety in the methods of collecting the revenue, but they hardly knew what to think of this new move. Attempts were made to break the cordon by stealth, but the police were alert. They had to be alert for *Jan Larens* was close at hand. Then the cattle began to complain, and at length a deputation came forth with humility, protesting their sorrow in that they had no ready cash wherewith to pay and profuse in assurances for the future if only the Protector of the Poor would permit their cattle to graze. Talk was unavailing, so in the early afternoon the arrears were paid and the cattle released. The lesson served for all the villages of that district and there was no further trouble.

Another story from the same source¹ illustrates the physical strength for which the Paniput magistrate was noted, a possession that undoubtedly endeared him to the Jats. One of his villages had caught fire and there was no chance of saving it. An old lady, whose sole property was a huge sack of corn, finding that the neighbours were too busy to drag her treasure into safety, philosophically concluded that life would not be worth living with nothing to support it. Seating herself on the sack she awaited the end, when in rushed Jan Larens, the alien magistrate, the Thor, the Hercules, the jest-loving Rustum, who certainly "laid about him as he willed." He grasped the mighty sack and carried it away and the old woman decided to live. Next day—hearing, perhaps, of the wonder excited by the feat—Lawrence sallied forth to test his strength

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. chap. iii.

on this same grain sack. The stimulus of urgent need being lacking, he actually found himself unable to lift the sack from the ground.

A certain landholder refused to pay his taxes and the collector-magistrate rode thirty miles in order to persuade him. The place was walled, the gates were barred, and the Englishman could not enter. He had with him an orderly whom he despatched to Delhi with a request for the guns. Then, though it was the hottest season of the year, he sat down alone by the main gate, where he stayed all day in the glare of the sun, while the chieftain cursed him in his heart and was yet afraid to strike though the alien was at his mercy. Still no help came. At last the head of a neighbouring village offered his assistance. It was accepted; the ally's retainers formed up before the gates, and the disciple of Pistol, seeing that the bull-dog sahib would not be shaken off, gave in, paid the land-tax and a fine into the bargain, and, in all probability, became a crony of the collector-sahib. As for the ally, more than twenty years later, when Delhi had fallen by the exertions of Sir John Lawrence, a list of rebel leaders condemned to death was given him to sign. Glancing over the names he was attracted by that of the man who had thus come to his aid, and that rebel's life was saved.

The story of the murder of Ram Singh by his brother Bulram proves that John Lawrence would have made an admirable detective had that highly desirable career been his. The finding and examination of the body by torch-light; the trail of the footsteps in the sandy soil, with the discovery that one of the assassins must have made a circuit to cut off the flying victim and head him towards the rest of the gang; the deduction therefrom that, as Ram Singh, the victim, was fleet of foot, the murderer must have been a particularly speedy man; the recollection that post-runners are selected for their running

powers, and that Ram Singh's brother, with whom he had quarrelled, was a postman—all these details are far more readable than those of the average detective story. So is the account of the night search for Bulram and the finding of the man calmly smoking in the post-house.

"I went up and addressed him on some indifferent topics, but so calm and self-possessed were his replies that I began to think I was in error. . . . However, taking up a lamp I looked steadily at his countenance. Though he knew my gaze was on him, he never moved a muscle, but continued smoking with apparent apathy, while his eye, which met mine, never quailed an instant.

"One of the sepoys standing by me broke the silence by exclaiming, 'Bulram, don't you see it is the huzoor (his Honour) and yet you remain seated!' Bulram never moved, nor, indeed, appeared as if he heard him. I put down my hand and, touching him on the shoulder, said, 'Stand up, Bulram, I want to look at you.' I had, till then, been stooping over him, as he was squatting in the usual native style upon the ground, and it only then occurred to me that he must have some reason for remaining in that posture. Bulram immediately stood up and I put my hand on his heart and said, 'What is the matter that your heart beats so violently?' He replied, 'I have been bathing and, fearing to be late at the post, ran up all the way.' With all his composure and readiness of reply there was something about his manner which brought back all my former suspicions. I stood attentively looking at him, when, all at once, I perceived a quantity of blood on his groin, which seemed to be welling out from under his *dhoty*. Pointing at the blood, I said, 'Ah, Bulram, what means this?' He gazed at me for an instant, and then said, 'Don't trouble yourself, I killed him.' "

Who can divine the feelings of that wretched Hindu as the big Englishman bent over him with the lamp? Was

it courage that enabled him to endure the close scrutiny with such composure, or uncomplaining resignation to the decrees of Fate? What were Bulram's feelings towards this alien who represented the power of the law to punish—hatred, impotent lust of revenge, or did he simply recognise in him the dispassionate instrument of destiny?

It was John Lawrence who, when his friend, William Fraser, had been murdered at Delhi, rode over at once and took up a clue that had been cast aside by his colleagues. The tracks of a horse had been traced to some cross-roads, where they suddenly ended. Guided by a native's casual remark, he entered the Delhi house of the Nawab of Ferozporc who had a grudge against Fraser. "Sauntering up to a spot in the yard where a fine chestnut horse was tethered, he began to examine his points and soon noticed some nailmarks on a part of the hoof where they are not usually found. It flashed across him in an instant that Dick Turpin had sometimes reversed the shoes of his horse's hoofs to put pursuers off the scent." Here might be the explanation of the abrupt ending of the trail. A trooper appeared. "'This is a nice horse,' said Lawrence. 'Yes,' replied the man, 'but he is very weak and off his feed; he has been able to do no work for a week.'"

The collector quietly gave the animal a feed of corn which was greedily eaten, and the trooper was arrested. One clue led to another, until the chain of evidence was complete, and the Nawab and his retainer were convicted and hanged.

Leading a *posse* of native police one moonlight night to effect the arrest of a robber and murderer, he was halted by a river, broad and rapid, across which the men refused to swim their horses.

"Well, you cowards may do what you like, but I am going," said the young magistrate, as he started across. The native officer swore that he would not leave his sahib though he feared they would both be drowned. Put to

shame, the remainder followed the lead, and though Lawrence and several others were thrown by their frightened steeds, all got across except one man.

"You see we are all safe after all," the magistrate commented.

"No, the rassaldar is drowned," said a policeman.

"What, the bravest of the whole lot of you! Let us go in again and see if we can save him."

But the white man had to make the attempt alone. He found and saved the drowning rassaldar at the expense of a bad kick from the horse. Injured as he was he hastened to the village, only to find that his quarry had been warned. The murderer was soon discovered, however, concealed on a flat roof, and the Englishman chased him along the tops of the houses. Finally the man jumped to the ground, and Lawrence, wounded already, yet risked the jump and dislocated his ankle. The robber got away for the time but was captured soon afterwards.

Such incidents being everyday occurrences it is not astonishing that the men of Paniput who witnessed his exploits should have regarded the Englishman as a demi-god.

" 'You Feringhis,' said an old chief to him one night, 'are wonderful fellows; here are two of you managing the whole country for miles around. When I was a young man we should have been going out four or five hundred horsemen strong to plunder it.' "

Another tale illustrating his readiness of resource and determination not to be beaten by any combination is related by the chief actor under the title *Passive Resistance*.

In the spring of 1838, when the famine was still raging in the North-West Provinces, John Lawrence was encamped not far from the town of Rewari when a feud arose between the Mussulman and Hindu inhabitants. The Hindus—an overwhelming majority—objected to the slaughter of oxen

by the Mussulmans, who naturally wished to eat beef, which was cheaper than mutton. The Hindus having threatened to prevent the sacrilege by force of arms, the Moslems appealed to the representative of the government, respectfully pointing out that, as the English policy was to make no distinction between castes or creeds, they did not consider that they ought to be dictated to by the Hindus on account of religious prejudices. They were willing to have their slaughter-house at a reasonable distance from the town in order to avoid offence.

Law and equity being on the side of the Mohammedans John Lawrence decided in their favour. The Hindus remained quiet until the celebration of the Mohurram Festival, when they attacked the Moslems with bricks, stones, and even dead pigs and dogs. The magistrate was then forty miles away, or by the road sixty miles. Information of the riot reached him in the early afternoon; at three o'clock he set off across a range of trackless hills, and, in spite of the dangers of the ride, he was in the town by ten p.m.

"Larens Sahib is come" was the cry of the amazed rioters, and presently the mob dispersed, awed by the resolution of one man. Then the Hindus anticipated Ireland. Being both the wholesale and the retail traders they instituted a boycott, closed their shops, and refused to trade with the Moslems, who had not even a day's food in hand. The latter begged the magistrate to permit them to force the granaries, or at least compel the Hindu controllers of supplies to open the shops. He replied that so long as they kept within the law he could not with justice use force. John Lawrence did not sit idle, however, and hope for a more reasonable spirit to prevail. He organised relief, bought at his own risk many wagon-loads of grain from the district round about, stored these supplies in the town, and chose a number of the Faithful to sell the food.

For three weeks the Hindus held out. They addressed petitions to the commissioner complaining of the unprecedented depravity of his assistant, but at last the shops opened, one by one, as the poorer Hindus began to see that they were losing their trade to no purpose. Then the boycott promptly collapsed, and a deputation humbly came forward to apologise, and, throwing the blame upon the priests, to express the readiness of the Hindu community to resume its usual vocations.

Resource, courage, and determination have been shown by these anecdotes. Here are a couple of stories in illustration of his humour.

One day he received from the officer in command at Delhi a letter that was absolutely illegible. He began his reply with "My dear Colonel," and ended with his signature, the rest of the contents being a simple scrawl. In a peppery mood the colonel sought out the offender, but was disarmed when the civilian invited him to read his own communication, a task which the writer had to give up as hopeless.

The second incident is related by Colonel Balcarres Ramsay, then a subaltern. After describing the finding of Mr. Lawrence in a favourite attitude, "pulling up his shirt sleeves and feeling his muscles," he relates that: "I happened to be in the same howdah with him and three or four others, on the back of an elephant going through the streets of Lahore, while our army was encamped before it. Seeing an officer approaching in solitary state on another elephant, he drove his alongside of it and said to me, 'Youngster, we are rather crowded here, you are one too many for us, there's a very nice old gentleman who will welcome you with open arms; now jump in quick.' I confess I had misgivings as to the 'nice old gentleman;' but to save myself from falling between the two elephants I had to clasp him round the neck, whereupon the 'nice

old gentleman ' roared at me, ' What . . . do you mean by boarding me in this fashion ? ' I said, ' Sir, it is not my fault ; but John Lawrence said you were very amiable, and that you would welcome me with open arms.' ' Ah ! ' he replied, ' I'll pay off Master John for this.' The old gentleman in question was Colonel Stuart, the Military Secretary to the Government of India, who, though a most estimable person, could hardly be called ' amiable.' ”¹

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 168.

CHAPTER V

(1833-1837)

THE REVENUE SURVEY

The Land Revenue—The New Settlement of the North-West Provinces—"Lawrence's confounded Zeal"—Village Communities.

HENRY LAWRENCE had left his guns, and while John was winning his spurs in the Delhi district, he was making his mark in the Revenue Survey.

One of the most baffling problems with which the regulation-bound Briton was called upon to deal was the joint assessment of the land revenue in a country whose system of land tenure is wholly different from that to which he was accustomed, and in favour of which he was naturally prejudiced. Many good men have grappled therewith and been thrown, having found that, strangely enough, the Oriental does not take kindly to Western methods, and that machine-made systems annoy him, even when the advantages are plain enough—to the Western mind. If he is oppressed it is for a purpose and in a manner that he understands, an oppression to which he is inured, and from which he may see a chance of escape; whereas the ways of the English are puzzling, their rules are inflexible, their laws—apparently drawn up in the interests of the thievish usurer and the despised babu—seem full of snares for the honest ryot, who simply wants to be left undisturbed. He may even prefer the high assessment of some despot of his own blood to the comparatively low demands

made by the Company's officials, for in the latter case every rupee will be collected; in the former there is always a chance of evading the law by lying, fraud, or violence, and the Oriental is a gambler by nature.

That India is a continent may be a truism, but it must be constantly borne in mind. Even under the strongest of the Moguls, the Hindu and Moslem princes governed their states much as they pleased, but in every province the ownership of the land was the same. It belonged to the crown, and the peasants and even the large "landowners" were merely tenants-at-will. Instead of exacting rent for the grant of the right to till the earth and enjoy its fruits, the ruler held a lien upon the produce, and the land revenue was "originally a share of the grain-heap on the threshing-floor."¹ In time a money payment took the place of payment in kind, the amount being arbitrarily fixed by the ruler or by the revenue-farmer who had bid highest for the right to collect as much as he could. If wise he did not assess too high; if reckless, there was no limit to his extortions, and large tracts of land lay waste because there was no inducement to cultivate it.

The East India Company had done its utmost to place the land-tax on a more satisfactory and scientific basis—that is, in accordance with European ideas. They had not made a success of the attempt. Taking previous assessments as their basis, they would exact, say, forty rupees from a cultivator from whom fifty had been demanded by the late ruler, without taking into account that where the man was assessed at fifty rupees the agents and revenue-farmers would take a hundred if they could get it or, perhaps, let him off for twenty-five in a bad season. But, English fashion, the Company wanted forty rupees, neither more nor less, from those who were assessed at forty. The result was that many escaped too lightly, and far more

¹ Baden-Powell, *Land Revenue and Tenure*, p. 33.

were ruined during bad seasons. The peasants, accustomed to oppression, without expectation or hope that any new assessment would make their lot less hard, were wont to view each change with apprehension, and the more wealthy zamindars, having been able under native rule to protect themselves by bribing the subordinate officials, were also opposed to English methods. The unhappy results of former settlements had not been due to any desire to squeeze the ryot. The Company wished to be just, to levy the amount that a man should fairly pay as rent for the land and the up-keep of the government that protected his life and property, dug his canals, and constructed his roads. The difficulty was to arrive at a just estimate in so vast a territory, thickly populated by sons of the soil, who lacked capital and were absolutely dependent on the weather, whose acres varied so greatly in number and in productiveness. Systems of survey in detail for the whole continent had been tried and abandoned, largely owing to the ruinous expense and to the difficulty experienced in obtaining sufficiently reliable data upon which to work.

The conditions of land tenure in India had given rise to much confusion, and in the early days of revenue settlement, Mr. Holt Mackenzie—one of the pioneers of the scientific settlement—had difficulty in persuading the government to make the village the unit of assessment in the North-West Provinces, and to treat a village community as a corporate body. The English officials wished to deal with the landlord—the man that owned the land cultivated by the ryots—and were troubled by his absence. Frequently some astute and sympathetic Hindu of influence would take upon himself to gratify this longing and be duly installed as owner of a tract to which he had no shadow of a claim.

One of the most energetic advocates of thorough investigation was Mr. Robert Mertens Bird, and there are

few men to whom the natives of Hindustan owe a larger debt. He was dissatisfied with the existing chaotic system, as was every able man, and he resolved to reform it. The problem had reduced wise administrators to despair; previous attempts to put matters right had left them in a worse state, and educated natives who, innocently enough, had been permitted to speak for and represent the community, had gained their own ends at the expense of their humbler neighbours.

Mr. Bird had noticed the young artilleryman, and he watched him. Convinced of his genius he took counsel with him.

But what knowledge could this gunner have of land survey? He had given up a holiday to study the subject in Ireland; all his life he had kept his eyes open, trying to understand all he saw and the cause of each effect; his sympathy was ever with the weak and the oppressed, and whenever he saw a wrong being done he must needs plan the means by which he would right it, had he the opportunity and the power. And now that these had come, he grasped at the chance of doing good, and gave of the best that was in him. That work in Ireland was now to bear fruit. Henry Lawrence applied his genius to the problem, and Mr. Bird found his suggestions practical and knew that he had done well to call him from his guns when he saw the vigour and strong common-sense which his new assistant brought to the work.

The new survey of the North-West Provinces had for object the more equitable settlement of the land revenue, and Henry Lawrence's duty was to conduct the investigation preliminary to the new assessment, to map out and mark the boundaries of the villages and even the fields in certain large districts, to classify them according to the quality of the soil and extent of the holdings, and to investigate and record the rights of the claimants.

It was a task that suited the man. He was to a large extent his own master with a numerous staff to control and to train. It involved an open-air life; he learned to know the natives in their own homes, and about their daily rounds, gradually understanding and sympathising with their points of view, listening to the headman who would come for an evening talk with this new sahib that seemed to possess, not only that sense of duty and love of justice common to the sahibs, but also a quality of sympathetic comprehension foreign to the white man's nature. Day by day he learned more of their grievances, of the many ways in which the Company's officials, meaning to do right, yet added to the grievous burdens of the peasant—a result largely due to the corruption of the native officials, whose power was great in proportion to the ignorance of their English superiors. He taught himself not merely what to do, but also what to avoid.

He soon perceived that two of India's most urgent needs were more canals and more and better roads. In the course of a few years he was in a position to order that roads should be made and that the benefits of irrigation should be greatly extended. "Push on your roads," he used to say. "Open out your district. The farmer, the soldier, the policeman, the traveller, the merchant, all want roads. Cut roads in every direction."

He always contended that the cutting-down of outlay on these *necessities* was the most baneful of all false economies. He had at an earlier stage wished for a canal appointment, so strong was his belief in irrigation. One of his reasons for desiring such a post is as strange as it is characteristic, for the certainty of having to endure and deal with "endless complaints" is not usually a recommendation. The Canal Superintendent, says Henry Lawrence in a letter to Letitia, "is therefore brought into contact with the natives, and has, of course, endless complaints about

getting no water, and inability to dig their drains or little canals. But all this I should consider a pleasing variety, for, though the temper is tried, much is learnt, and with but little trouble to oneself much kindness can be done.”¹

Henry Lawrence was hardly human.

Though abnormally sympathetic he was never weak. He discouraged cheating and the taking of bribes in a very practical way, and his punishments, if not legal, were made to fit the crime. On one occasion a native surveyor, who had taken a bribe, was perched in a tree, over his chief's tent, an object of scorn and derision, and an example to his fellows. Under Mr. Bird, Lawrence soon began to make his mark, and the eyes of men in authority were turned towards him. In fact “Lawrence's confounded zeal” was not relished by a few of his co-labourers, who, in addition to the burden of double work, had to suffer reproof because he was still able to do twice as much.

In an official letter to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, dated September 3, 1837, the secretary to the *Sudder* Board of Revenue states:—

“Captain Lawrence is one of the most experienced and zealous of the officers employed on the survey, and has conducted the complicated process of double survey more successfully perhaps than any other, and has certainly entered more entirely into the Board's views. Captain Lawrence is prepared to guarantee with the establishment stated a complete survey of three thousand square miles per annum when the villages average one square mile each.”

In India the term “village” is applied to the whole extent of the lands cultivated by one of the village communities, of which there are two quite distinct forms, the “*Ryotwari*” and the “*Lambardari*.” In the former each individual *ryot* cultivates a separate holding and is separately assessed; there is no land held in common, and the

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 107.

head of the chief family of the community is the hereditary headman (*patel*). As a rule the *patel* is a man of influence; he has the best holding, and occupies the largest house. This is the form of community that prevails in southern, central, and western India, and in the greater part of Bengal; but although these Ryotwari villages are probably more than twice as numerous¹ as the Lambardari, or joint communities, the latter is the Indian village community known to English readers, who are indebted to Sir H. S. Maine's well-known work for their ideas on this subject.

The Lambardari village is general in the North-West Provinces (where Henry Lawrence was employed) and in Oudh and the Punjab, the two provinces with which his name is most closely associated. Here the whole area cultivated by the community is assessed as a single tenure. Sometimes the land is jointly cultivated and the harvest shared, but more frequently a holding is allotted to each member, and there is usually a tract of waste land held in common. The co-sharing community is often composed of members of one clan—occasionally of one family—and its affairs are ordered by a *panchayat*, or council of elders, not by a *patel*. The English have, however, introduced into these joint communities a headman, termed *lambardar* (a numberer—a corruption of the English word) to represent the village in all dealings with the government. He is also responsible for the fair division of the land-tax, and to some extent for the conduct of the village. A second native official, the village accountant and registrar, is common to both types of community. His duty is to keep the village record of rights, a copy of which he sends every year to the district officer.

In an Indian village will be found all the castes needed to supply its wants, from the high-caste Brahmin and

¹ Baden-Powell, *The Origin and Growth of Village Communities in India*, p. 20.

Banya (petty trader) to the vermin-eating scavenger, for each village is practically self-sustaining. There will be the field-labourer, herdsman, carpenter, blacksmith, potter, barber (who is the village surgeon and also a kind of matrimonial agent), water-carrier, washerman, weaver, leather-worker, sweeper, and other castes.

These low-caste and out-caste labourers and menials are of aboriginal or mixed descent, and all castes are, of course, hereditary. They have no voice in the village council, and they are not as a rule paid by the job, but usually by a share of the year's produce, a cash allowance, and certain perquisites. Where materials are required for any piece of work they are provided by the members of the community for whom the work is being done.

In area the villages cultivated by such communities will average at least six hundred acres, and Lawrence had guaranteed to survey no less than three thousand villages within the year.

CHAPTER VI

(1835-1838)

HENRY LAWRENCE'S LOVE STORY

Death of Colonel Lawrence—Henry's Care for His Mother—
Marries Honoria Marshall—Her Letters from India—Rumours
of War—A Wife's Remonstrance.

HENRY LAWRENCE was ever as good as his word. He guaranteed three thousand square miles and accomplished five thousand. It was at this period of his life that Mr. Thomason gave him the nickname "Gunpowder" because of the "explosive force" with which he shattered all obstacles. His heart was in his work—yet his heart was in England. Great as his passion for duty was, it could not stifle his love for Honoria Marshall, though he found in energetic devotion to his work a relief from his thoughts.

Since the parting in 1829 two forces had combined to bid him forget. The one was his duty to his mother, who was dependent on her sons' support; the other his modesty, which assured him that he was unworthy. But in the survey his prospects brightened, the "Lawrence Fund" flourished, and in one of those moments when nothing seems impossible, he wrote to his sister that, "I really think I shall be mad enough to tell her my story and try to make her believe that I have loved for five years, and said nothing of my love. The thing seems incredible, but it is true."

The death of his father, in May 1835, deterred him from acting upon the resolve. The widowed mother must now

be his first care, and he must give up all hope of winning Honoria Marshall. So he threw himself into the survey work with redoubled energy, to lift his thoughts above the ruin of his hopes, until his friends feared for his health and warned him against trying to measure too many villages, against staying out too long in the sun, and the remonstrance had as much effect as such advice usually has.

At this point Letitia, the fairy godmother, stepped in with the magic wand, and the dejection was displaced by a great joy. She told Miss Marshall that which Henry's humility had forbidden him to speak, and Honoria was proud and happy to have won the love of such a man.

Colonel Lawrence's pension had died with him, and the widow had been left penniless. Sir Herbert Edwardes has told how the old soldier could never see a fellow-creature in want while he had a pound to give away; how in his last illness he destroyed the bond of a brother officer "lest his executors should demand payment." The five sons had inherited the unselfishness and liberality of the hero of Seringapatam, and, even in the first rapture of the amazing knowledge that his love was returned, Henry Lawrence did not forget that his chief care must be for his mother. "Mind me, Lettice," he wrote, after thanking his sister for this new proof of her love, "I set agoing *our fund* and rather dunned John into aiding it *at first*; but I mistook my man, for, instead of requiring to be urged, he has put me to shame. It would, therefore, ill become me now to leave him in the lurch. . . . I hold no claim on me so sacred as to put by all I can spare until such a sum is accumulated as at interest will produce a moderate income for our mother."¹ In his zeal to cherish and comfort her, said Sir John Kaye, "he had the fervour of an apostle and the simplicity of a child."

After the death of Mrs. Lawrence a copy in her own

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 132.

handwriting of one of Henry's earliest letters to his sweetheart was found among her most precious treasures:—

“ You have already, my precious Honoria, a daughter's interest in my mother's heart, and, I trust, feel towards her as a child to her parent. She has ever been to us all a kind and too indulgent one, and we have hardly ministered to her as we might, and ought to have done, when money is but a small matter, and the giving it requires more delicacy by far than taking, and I feel that it is because our mother is somewhat beholden to us in a pecuniary way, that we are the more called on to be watchful and jealous over ourselves, and do all in our power to soothe her in her widowhood; for her heart must indeed be now desolate and alive to neglect or want of sympathy, after possessing for thirty-seven years the first place in such a heart as my father's; one that teemed with affection; not cold formal attention, but spirit-stirring love; ever the same, unceasing and unchanged to the last. His was indeed a heart of hearts, only too kind and too trusting; but he is gone, and I trust that through the merits of our Saviour is now in peace, and looking down upon his children with his own look of love.”¹

John's congratulations were characteristically practical.

“ I sincerely congratulate you on your happy prospects. Honoria Marshall was certainly, when I knew her, a delightful creature. You are certainly a most fortunate fellow. . . . You must try and get some other appointment than in the survey, which will never do for a married man, as you can't drag your wife about in the jungles in the hot winds.”

Miss Marshall arrived in the Hughli in July 1837, and on August 21 they were married at the Mission Church, Calcutta.

The extracts from the wife's letters and journal reveal a woman whose intellect and character were of the highest

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 134-135.

order. Since their first meeting sorrow and sickness had left their traces on her youthful loveliness, but they had brought out the womanly sweetness and sympathy, and the "otherworldliness" which were such strong features of her character.

On the outward voyage she writes pathetically of the "unwonted sensation" of feeling "perfectly well," but though the constant changes and continual moving about of her first years as the wife of Henry Lawrence must have been trying to so delicate a constitution, her letters contain no complaints. They disclose a brave determination to make the best of everything, to see the bright—even the humorous—side of strange and embarrassing ways of life, to do nothing and say no word that would discourage or hinder her husband's work.

Her writings prove that she was no mean narrator. They are full of bright descriptions of Indian scenes, of the interesting people she comes across, the kind English folk, the picturesque native assistants, the clergyman's widow, and the Hindu girls of the Orphan Refuge in Calcutta. Though the excellent work of this school was for the benefit of native girls alone, Mrs. Wilson, its founder, has also earned the gratitude of Europeans, for the impression made upon the newly-married couple was partly responsible for the scheme of the Lawrence Asylums, with which the names of Henry and Honoria Lawrence are for ever associated, the living memorial to their goodness when the conquest and pacification of the Sikhs has become a matter of history.

Before leaving home she had given Letitia a solemn promise that she would do what lay in her power to confirm that trust in God which was already her lover's possession, to help him and be helped by him on the rugged path, to lift his thoughts in times of tribulation above his sorrows and discouragements. And the strong man was glad so

to be guided. His love for his wife, ardent as it was from the first, burned the more brightly after each successive year. There was no disillusion.

Honorina Marshall left her home firmly resolved to share in the labours and worries of her hard-worked husband. "You can't drag your wife about in the jungles," said John, but the wife settled that for herself. She could help him, and where she could not help she would not hinder, and he was so careless and unsparing of himself that he needed some one to look after him. While at Gorakhpur, before marriage, he used to be too absorbed in his work to have leisure for meals. He would invite people to dinner and omit to make any provision for them, whereupon his neighbour, Mr. Reade, would come to the rescue time after time. But, whatever might be lacking, "no man ever sat at Henry Lawrence's table without learning to think better of the natives," said one who had partaken of his hospitality.

"You bid me describe him," writes the wife to her friend, Mrs. Cameron. "I will try. He is thirty-one but looks older, is rather tall, very thin and sallow, and has altogether an appearance of worse health than he really has. Dark hair, waxing scanty now, high forehead, very projecting eyebrows, small sunken eyes, long nose, thin cheeks, no whiskers, and a very pretty mouth. Very active and alert in his habits, but very unmethodical. As to dress and externals, perfectly careless, and would walk out with a piece of carpet about his shoulders as readily as with a coat,¹ and would invite people to dinner on a cold shoulder

¹ Sir John Kaye has told how, ten years later, just after the honour of knighthood had been conferred upon Henry Lawrence, they were walking together in Regent Street, and it gradually dawned upon the unsophisticated Irishman that his attire was calculated to attract attention. He was wearing "an antiquated frock-coat, and an old grey shepherd's plaid was crossed over his breast." "They must think me a great guy," he observed to his companion, and was straightway conducted to the nearest tailor.

of mutton as readily as to a feast. There now, I do think you have an impartial description of my lord and master.”¹

Here is an extract from a letter to Letitia (now Mrs. Hayes).

“Dearest Lettice,—When I think of the being to whom I am joined, I wonder where such an one came from, and I take delight in analysing the heart laid open to me. I never saw a being who had so right an estimate of the true use of money. He literally is but a steward of his own income, for the good of others. But he has ever a higher generosity; he never blames others for faults he is himself free from. You know his perfect transparency of character. I suppose since he was born it never entered his head to do anything for effect, and his manner is precisely the same to all ranks of people. . . . No one sees his imperfections more clearly than I do, so I do not judge blindly, nor do I hesitate to tell him when I think he is wrong. But his faults may be summed up in very few words. He wants method; he is occasionally hasty; and he is too careless of appearances. But if you were to see how his temper is tried by the nature of his work, you would not wonder at its giving way. And this fault is clearly mending. Indeed, I often wonder at his forbearance. I sometimes fear lest my love for him should become of that idolatrous kind that brings chastisement on itself; yet surely I look on him as the gift of God, and never I think were my prayers so fervent as now that they are joined with his. His un-professing simplicity of conduct often checks my *wordy* tendency, and makes me weigh the practical value of my feelings before I give them utterance.”²

Henry Lawrence was now the head of an establishment, nearly one thousand strong, and as the work of superintendence necessitated constant journeys up and down

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 153-154.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. pp. 160-161.

the North-Western Provinces, the bride could hardly be said to have a home. She found comfort in the thoughts that "though I may not interrupt him by speaking, I can sit by him while he works at his maps and papers," and that "his situation gives him considerable power for benefiting others. It is pleasant to think how many of those about him owe their comfortable and respectable situations in life wholly to him."

"But you will desire rather to know," she wrote to Mrs. Cameron, "how I find my own spiritual condition affected by this new world. Certainly I miss very much the outward observances of religion, and its public institutions; but with these we have also left behind much of the wood, hay, and stubble that deface piety, where it is professed by the many. It is a position to try our motives, for, situated as we are, there is nothing to be either gained or lost by religion, there is no temptation to profess more than we feel, or to deceive ourselves by setting down excitement for piety."¹

To another friend: "Yet there are advantages here too, and piety, if it flourish at all in such a life, is more likely to be simple and healthy, than where we are in the excitement of religious *bustle*. You know we used to argue this point at home, where I have impertinently told you, that your *religious dissipation* was as bad as other peoples' *worldly*."

His assistant at Gorakhpur has given us some idea of the bride's luxurious life during her early days in the East.² He describes her great gifts, her cheerful character, and happiness in sharing her husband's work. Captain and Mrs. Lawrence shared "a tent some ten feet square, a suspended shawl separating her bedroom and dressing-table from the hospitable breakfast-table; and then both were in their glory." In the north of the Gorakhpur

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 151.

² *Kaye's Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. ii. pp. 283-284.

district a jungle tract had to be surveyed, adjoining the Terai, that belt of malarious forest—a preserve of the tiger and the elephant—that separates Nepal from Hindustan. Lawrence's party attacked one side, the assistant's the other, and they met and connected the survey in a spot where the dews were so heavy that the beds were wet through each night, and fires had to be kept alight to scare away tigers and wild elephants. What then was the assistant's surprise to find Mrs. Lawrence sharing the peril. "She was seated [writing letters!] on the bank of a nullah, her feet overhanging the den of some wild animal."

By the close of the year 1837 the Gorakhpur district was surveyed and the Lawrences set out for Allahabad, the next district on the list. It was the fate of Henry Lawrence that in whatever place he stayed, during his thirty-six years' wandering service, he never left except amid general sorrow. The lads of the English school at Gorakhpur missed the friend who had never been too busy to take an interest in them, who had found them places in the Survey Office when too old for school, and who, when work was over, had hired ponies and sent them off for long rides for the good of their health and for the joy that it gave him to make others happy.¹

Among the coincidences that abound in the record of these brothers' lives the case of the *second* Henry Lawrence is remarkable. Soon after Henry Lawrence's first arrival in India he received letters intended for another lieutenant of the same name, of the 19th Native Infantry, and this state of confusion continued for years. Now came to India a letter from Letitia beginning "Dearest Henry and Honoria," and this was opened and partly read by the other Henry Lawrence before he realised that it was not

¹ "For every child he met in my own family, in the Missionary or other public schools, he had a word of kindness or encouragement."—Mr. Raike's *Notes*.

his. For he also had married a wife with the name of Honoria.

About this time a second war with Burma threatened, and there was also a talk of "that constant bugbear" a Gurkha invasion of British India. Henry Lawrence at once remembers that he is a soldier.

He had proved himself humble in ways that admit of no doubt, but the humility was not inconsistent with a readiness to undertake responsibility. Few great men have been so free from conceit—in the objectionable sense of the word—yet his self-confidence was sublime. In a man of less sound judgment the manner of showing this would have been amusing, for the fear of being laughed at rarely deterred him from speaking out. Seven years before his marriage, while still an obscure lieutenant of twenty-four years of age, he had not shrunk from advising the Governor-General to reconsider the order substituting bullock for horse draft in the foot artillery. Having stated his arguments clearly and forcibly he begged his lordship to "pardon the intrusion and impute it to my anxiety to see the foot artillery, to which I am attached, in a state of efficiency, which I fear can never be the case so long as the field guns are drawn by bullocks." No sooner, then, did he hear of the preparations for war with Burma than he resolved to give the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief the benefit of his experiences in that country. He mapped out for their edification a plan of campaign, complete to the last detail of commissariat, baggage and draught animals, boats on the Irrawady, and number and class of guns, and penned another letter dealing with "The Quartermaster-General's Department, engineers, surveys, roads, canals, and statistics," urging the appointment of a staff corps, and outlining a system for "intersecting the country with canals, roads, and railroads."

The rumours of war were happily unfounded, and he

again immersed himself in the work of the survey, until on August 9, 1838, he was officially ordered to hold himself ready to rejoin his troop. The storm was about to burst on the western, not the eastern, frontier, and all the talk was now of Kabul. He begged leave to join the army at once in any capacity, and, ever busy with new schemes and reforms, he lost no time in sending a recommendation for the raising of a corps of guides, to be composed of the best material, of picked men noted for courage, endurance, and resource. He quoted examples of heavy losses and hardships due to lack of early information, and demonstrated that such a corps, costing comparatively little, might not only save the lives of thousands in case of a frontier war, but also be the means of avoiding enormous expense.

Here he might have stopped with advantage to the success of his scheme. The rest of his proposals, however, "looked just like a job from a very clumsy hand," as the Quartermaster-General wrote to George Lawrence, in commenting on the brother's naïve advice. Such was Henry's simplicity and directness that he, a brevet captain and a regimental lieutenant, went on to recommend to the Commander-in-Chief the four officers to be selected for the proposed guide corps. No subterfuge, no diplomacy about this. A viceroy would hesitate before conferring his patronage on four men at once; not so the lieutenant. No grandparent cares to be taught the method of sucking eggs, even should the youngster be a genius—and be in the right. Small wonder then that the communication was pigeon-holed. Eight years later, when Henry Lawrence was acting in the capacity of regent to an emperor, he was able to raise his own corps of guides and appoint his own officers, and that wonderful corps was not slow to justify its existence.

He awaited in vain the order to rejoin his troop, and his

wife, rejoicing that he was not yet to be taken from her, said not a word to discourage his military ardour. She had hardly realised that her husband was a soldier only temporarily engaged in civil employ; but Henry was his father's son and the trumpet-call had aroused the hereditary instinct. A year had passed and the wife was about to become a mother, and what must have been her inmost thoughts as she wrote his letters, correcting the expressions as the thoughts tumbled over one another—penning at his dictation urgent requests that he might be allowed to go to the front to work his guns. Honour and duty called him away. He belonged to the Horse Artillery and his comrades were going into danger. There was his place, with them, and he must not stay in ignoble safety. Mrs. Lawrence was cast in no less heroic mould than her husband, and she bowed to the call of duty. "When Henry's troop was ordered to march, he volunteered to join, nor could I object to his doing what was obviously his duty; though I clung to the hope that he would not be allowed to quit his office." ¹

More sublime even than her perfect unselfishness in those days of trial was the remonstrance addressed to her husband when he was about to commit the greatest wrong of a life singularly free from sin—the act upon which Henry Lawrence must have looked back with most regret. He had entered into a controversy with the biographer of General Sir John Adams. The exaggerated measure of praise given to that able and popular general and the apocryphal records of his marches and campaigns provoked him, as a student of military history, to correct certain statements. Admitting that General Adams was a fine soldier he took the biographer to task for making his hero the equal of Wellington, and, in some respects, the superior. He had no wish to belittle Adams, for whose achievements and

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, p. 197. Letter to Mrs. Cameron.

character he entertained sincere respect, but he feared that the effects of these eulogiums upon readers imperfectly acquainted with history, and incapable of forming a correct and well-balanced judgment upon things military, would be to lower the greatness of Wellington rather than to raise Adams to the level of the great Irishman.

The controversy attracted wide attention and, unable to meet the arguments of his young antagonist, the biographer descended to personalities and abuse. Finally he characterised certain of Lawrence's statements as "calumnies" and "untruths."

It is hardly surprising that a man of so sensitive a temperament and of so quick a temper should have contemplated an appeal to the ordeal of trial by combat, but that the intervention of the dearly-loved wife, the mother, who but a few weeks ago had given birth to her first-born, should have been, not disregarded certainly, but unavailing, comes as a shock.

Great must have been the pride, and keen the smart, to uphold him in wrong-doing in the face of this appeal.

September 26, 1838.

ALLAHABAD.

MY HUSBAND,—You did to-day what you never did before,—when I came behind you, you snatched up what you were writing, that I might not see it. All I *did* see was, 'My dear Campbell.' Dearest, though your entire confidence in me has been a prize beyond all price, yet I do not forget that you have a right to act as you please, to communicate or withhold your correspondence; and if you deem it best not to let me know the subject, you will never find me complain or tease you. But, my own love, I cannot help surmising the subject of to-day's letter, that subject which has not been an hour at a time absent from my mind for three weeks nearly. Ever since the few *unforgettable* words that passed between us, have I been struggling in my mind to decide what I ought to do. The words have often been on my lips, and the pen in my hand to address you, and as often has my heart failed me; but I cannot rest till I speak openly to you, and it is better to do so thus than in talking. On the question of duelling, I will not dwell on the *reason* of it—all *that* you admit; nor on the improba-

bility of *this matter* becoming more serious, for that does not affect the general question; nor on the *heart-scald* I feel, and the injury this does to your wife; these are *woman's* feelings,—men must act on a different view. No, my own most-beloved husband, I only put it on the ground of fearing God, or fearing man. I know that, to a man, the imaginary disgrace that attends an open declaration against duelling is bitter and agonising; but is not "*crucifixion*" the very word Christ applies to these mental sufferings, and that to which He calls us? You said, 'A man who submitted to the charge of untruth would be spit upon.' Was not Christ literally spit upon for us? Oh, darling, our Advocate on high feels for these trials. The *human* shame attending the death of a criminal is always spoken of as aggravating the sufferings of the Cross; thus showing us that our Saviour can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. It is only by looking to Him that we can gain strength for these trials; but from Him we can obtain it. You may think I put the matter too seriously; but is it more seriously than it will appear in the hour of death and day of Judgment? Do not imagine that I cannot enter into your feelings. Is your honour, your peace, your well-being, less dear to me than yourself? Nay, dearest; but when I see you do, not only what *I* think wrong, but what *your own* mind condemns, can I help speaking?

To any other fault you may be hurried; but there is deliberate sin, not only in giving or accepting a challenge, but in *intending* to do so. Oh! consider these things; and before you decide on anything, pray earnestly that God may direct you. If I have exceeded what a wife ought to say, you will forgive me.

Indeed, dearest, I have tried to persuade myself that it was my duty not to interfere; but my conscience would not let me believe this.¹

The heart-burning, the sense of shame and unworthiness, as he read his wife's words may be imagined, and the reverence and awe with which he would afterwards treasure that evidence of holy love. He knew, as he read, that his wife was right, and he worshipped her the more, yet hardened his heart and told himself again and again that no other course was open to him. Happily he was saved from himself, for the artillery officers through whom the challenge was sent decided that the provocation was not sufficiently grave to justify a challenge.

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 192-194.

CHAPTER VII

(1838-1842)

JOHN LAWRENCE FINDS A WIFE

Etawa—Fever and Home Leave—His Irish Temperament—
Marriage—Bad News from Kabul.

JOHN LAWRENCE had been for more than seven years in one or other of the Delhi divisions, when the quality and finish of his work were marked by the same Mr. Bird, who had already noticed, and put to good use, the qualifications of the elder brother. Here was another Lawrence who revelled in hard tasks, and who seemed made for the wielding of power. So the head of the survey called the Delhi magistrate to Etawa as settlement officer for that district, and this step brought the brothers into the same field of labour, though separated by hundreds of miles. Etawa provided John's first experience of real famine, and the lesson was not wasted. Here an attack of jungle fever might have deprived India of her ablest civilian had not his strength of will prevailed. He defied the doctor, who had declared that the patient could not hope to live another day, and with a bottle of Burgundy and a strong will as medicine, he rose from his bed and resumed his work.

He was, however, unfit for further duty, and as three months at Calcutta failed to set him right, he decided to return to England, and arrived home in the spring of 1840.

It was not the home he had left. His father was dead, Letitia was married, his brothers and sisters were scattered abroad, but he was welcomed by a mother's love, and

thankfulness that this, her fourth son, was following in the footsteps of the others. Few mothers have had such reason to be proud of their children, and when she reflected that it was the widow's poverty that called forth the self-denial of the four sons she would hardly regret that the generosity of her husband's nature had prevented his becoming wealthy. She might have dwelt less in their thoughts had she stood in no need of their help. The "Lawrence Fund" had grown apace, and the interest therefrom sufficed to keep Mrs. Lawrence in comfort. John, the unmarried civilian, was now the largest contributor to, and manager of, the fund. He had more of the Scottish temperament than his brothers, and was the financier of the family. Since Henry's marriage he had also taken the essentially "Irish" brother's financial affairs in hand, greatly to the profit of Henry and Honoria.

By many that knew him only in his official capacity as dispenser of justice and overseer of labour, John Lawrence was accounted a stern man, who, unsparing of himself, would demand the full tale of bricks from those over whom he was placed in authority. "When he is in anger," said one of his native settlement officers, "his voice is like a tiger's roar, and the pens tremble in the hands of the writers all round the room."¹ Yet the first journey he made from Clifton was a pilgrimage to the grave of the old nurse, Margaret, who had held his hand in the darkened room, and whose devotion he never forgot.

Those who had the privilege of his friendship would not have been surprised by this proof of affection. It was their good fortune to see him at play, often rough and boisterous, at times gentle and kindly; now and then concealing the tenderness of his affection beneath a veil of chaff, for John Lawrence had his share of the family's Irish blood. The humour-loving side of his character was displayed

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 99.

during a visit to his sister, Mrs. Hayes. His love for Letitia was evident enough, but his was not the conventional method of expression, and a friend of Mrs. Hayes has recorded her surprise at his playfulness. "He would romp with her and keep up a perpetual chaff, finding a continual source of fun in the age and peculiarities of Mr. Hayes, for whom he had nevertheless a great respect, though he used to take great delight in teasing her about him, and saying that he was the very model of a decoy Thug."¹ It may be explained that Mr. Hayes was a venerable clergyman.

To the last he abhorred overmuch conventionality, classing as "cakey-men" all that pride themselves upon the correctness of their attitude towards the little things that do not count.

The same lady tells how his store of anecdotes of Eastern life and adventure would keep them interested night after night. In the morning he would amuse them by narrating his escapades at some party on the previous evening, his pretended object being the search for the "calamity." By this term he referred to the future Lady Lawrence, and the three qualities he demanded of this unknown personage were good health, good temper, and good sense. Though not considered necessary, good looks would be welcomed.

Next summer he found the "calamity" in County Donegal, and his life was henceforward blessed and enlarged. Harriette Catherine Hamilton combined the three requisites with the additional grace. She was the daughter of the rector of Culdaff and Cloncha, a strong, brave man, who could welcome John Lawrence as a son-in-law after his own heart. The marriage took place in August 1841, and a tribute to the characters of the Hamiltons lies in the significant fact that "rich and poor,

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 120.

high and low, Catholic and Protestant, came from far and near to do honour to the bride and her family.”¹

He does not appear to have been beset by doubts concerning the wisdom of his choice, and he made no attempt to conceal his opinion. Many years later, having become aware that Lady Lawrence had left the room, Sir John asked where she was, and repeated the question after a short interval. At the third inquiry Mrs. Hayes exclaimed, “Why, really, John, it would seem as if you could not get on for five minutes without your wife.”

“That’s why I married her,” said he.

After thirty years of married life John Lawrence, Viceroy of India, wrote in his diary, “In August 1841 I took perhaps the most important, and certainly the happiest, step in my life—in getting married. My wife has been to me everything that a man could wish or hope for.”²

The bride and bridegroom spent six months on the Continent, a holiday that ended abruptly on the arrival of the news from Kabul. They hurried back to England in order to comfort Mrs. George Lawrence and her children, stricken down by the tidings of the captivity of husband and father.

John Lawrence quickly made up his mind to return to duty. But as he had never really recovered from the Etawa fever, the doctors solemnly warned him that he must abandon all idea of India. Believing that there was little to be looked for at home, and influenced by the fascination of the East, he declared that if he could not live in India he would go and die there; and in the autumn of 1842 he and his wife sailed from Southampton.

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 125.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 126.

CHAPTER VIII

(1838-1841)

THE CIS-SUTLEJ STATES

Henry at Ferozepore—His Town prospers—The Sikhs have Confidence in Him.

ON October 1, 1838, Henry Lawrence left Allahabad to join the army of the Indus. He received an offer of a hundred rupees monthly to act as correspondent to a Calcutta paper, and accepted on certain terms. He would supply no information that was not "above board"; the money was to be divided between the Calcutta Orphan Asylum and the Benevolent Institution, and his name was not to be mentioned.

Hostilities were suspended, however, the army was reduced, and he would have returned to Allahabad in due course had he not become aware of an opportunity that seemed full of promise. Mr. George Clerk, the political agent at Ludhiana—one of the capitals of the Protected Sikh States—was in want of an assistant to take charge of Ferozepore, an outpost on the Sutlej, over against the empire of the Sikhs. Captain Lawrence perceived the importance of the situation of this village, and believed that he could make it the base for the operations of the Kabul army. He applied for the post, and, on the recommendation of Mr. Frederick Currie, he was appointed officiating assistant to Mr. Clerk.

The Cis-Sutlej Sikh States had been saved by the influence and prestige of the East India Company from the rapacity of Ranjit Singh, who had absorbed the baronies

and principalities of his Sikh colleagues and Moslem enemies until the Punjab and Kashmir were his and the Pathan tribesmen of the Trans-Indus plains owned his sway. The "one-eyed Sikh"—at first hardly more than a robber-chief—was a statesman as well as a soldier, and under his strong rule the Sikh sect became a nation and the army of the Khalsa one of the most powerful and the best armed in the annals of India.

Ranjit Singh was ambitious as he was daring, and he greatly desired to possess the vineyards of the Cis-Sutlej chieftains. But the Indian Government had no wish to see him cross the barrier of the Sutlej—the great river that divides the Punjab and Hindustan—for his power was already a menace to the peace of India, and they held over the Cis-Sutlej Sikhs the shield of British protection. If Ranjit Singh had most of the vices common to Asiatic despots, he had one quality that rarely flourishes amid such environment as was his. Though the owner of a most efficient fighting-machine, though consistently victorious in his undertakings, though surrounded by flatterers who lauded his virtues and his invincibility, the "Lion of the Punjab" was not overwhelmed by the contemplation of his own greatness. He still retained his powers of judgment and sense of proportion; he believed his English neighbours to be irresistible, and he never swerved from his determination to live and die the Emperor of the Punjab.

Ranjit Singh, therefore, in pursuance of his policy to remain on good terms with the English, gave up with a good grace his designs upon the Cis-Sutlej States. The Protected Sikh Princes were delivered from the peril, and they have proved their gratitude by consistent loyalty to their preservers.

There was no lack of work connected with the new post. Henry Lawrence was collector, magistrate, civil and military engineer, universal provider, and paymaster to

the troops that passed through Ferozepore. He cheerfully added to his other duties that of honorary postmaster to the army as soon as his ready sympathy reminded him how the men would be longing for letters from home; and he was also called upon to perform the marriage and baptismal services. Yet, by the acceptance of this important office, he had suffered a loss of two hundred rupees per month. John, the civilian, was in receipt of two thousand rupees monthly after nine years' service; Henry, who had been in the army sixteen years, had to be content with seven hundred.

The district was very unsettled. Escape across the frontier being easy, murder and outrage cost the province at least five hundred lives each year. The energy of the new magistrate quickly showed good results; he rebuilt and walled the place, and as life and property became secure the people migrated into Lawrence's town, shops were opened, and a tide of prosperity set in. He was called in to decide a boundary dispute of long standing on the British side of the Sutlej. Usually in such cases one party will be bitterly aggrieved and the other not wholly satisfied, but so impressed were the neighbouring chiefs by his sagacity and fairness, and by his amazing understanding of the Asiatic mind, that petty "barons" across the border as well as in the Protected States began to petition that Captain Lawrence might be sent to settle their boundaries.

The manner of his first meeting with one who was afterwards numbered among his most distinguished disciples illustrates the greatness of his influence over the turbulent fanatics of the frontier. While shooting along the banks of the Sutlej, Lieutenant Harry Lumsden and a friend had been knocked from their horses and seized by a mob of Sikhs, and on the pretext of their having murdered a man whom they had never seen were condemned to be shot within ten minutes.¹ "All of a sudden something occurred

¹ *Lumsden of the Guides*, pp. 12-13.

which completely changed the state of affairs, for we were not only taken back to the fort, but soon found ourselves released, our servants collected, camp arranged, and abundance of provisions brought in for man and beast. The headman of the village arrived with presents and all sorts of apologies," for the news was brought that one of Lumsden's servants had escaped and was now riding hard towards Ferozepore to inform Lawrence Sahib of the outrage. "These were the magical words which had saved our lives," and late at night Lawrence himself arrived; the mob cowered before him, and the chief offenders were given up.

Ranjit Singh died and unrest ensued. The question of war at once came to the front. It was a matter of common knowledge that the Sikhs, puffed up by their career of success, would have invaded British territory long ago but for Ranjit Singh's tight grasp of the reins. Lawrence was in the habit of taking time by the forelock; he made himself acquainted with the histories and characters of the most powerful Sikh sirdars, he got to know all about their army, and much about their resources and prejudices, and found time to write a romance of the Punjab for the benefit of all who might care to learn something of the Sikhs.

At Ferozepore a second child was born, a girl who was, of course, named Letitia. "We could never so have loved," Mrs. Lawrence had occasion to write a few months later, "had we not sorrowed together, and together found peace and joy in believing." For the children were attacked by fever and the little girl was taken from them.

"How little can we guess the shape in which blessings are to come,"¹ the mother wrote to Letitia Hayes. "Since we were called on to part with our daughter . . . I have now the full knowledge that my own husband is the faithful

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 271-272.

and humble servant of his God and Saviour—that the heart which was always so full of every right feeling towards his fellow-creatures is also brought home to his Maker. You know how lowly Henry thinks of himself; how he shrinks from any profession that he may not wholly act up to, but I would you could see the gentle, humbler spirit that actuates him, the truly Christian temper of his whole mind.”

And while they were yet mourning their loss there came to the outpost the terrible news from Kabul that spread consternation throughout the British Empire and paralysed the Government of India. He sent on the news and, while waiting for orders, began to prepare the troops within his district for the work that lay before them.

CHAPTER IX

(1841-1842)

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR

Lord Auckland's Madness—The Kabul Disaster—George Lawrence a Prisoner—Sikh Contempt of the English—Gravity of the Situation—Henry Lawrence selected as Political Officer with the Army—Sikh Co-operation—A Wife's Heroism.

THE First Afghan War was a sorry business. Leaving out of the question the moral aspect, war is usually waged either because there is hope of something to be gained by fighting or because there is fear lest something should be lost by not fighting. The First Afghan War stands outside this category; it was the effect of incompetence alone. It was not more wicked than other wars, except as stupidity and ignorance may be termed wicked, and a spice of purposeful malevolence would almost be welcomed as a relief in the sordid story by unregenerate human nature.

Early in the century the Sadozai royal family of Afghanistan had been overthrown by the Barakzais, and in the year 1806 the dethroned amir, Shah Shuja, sought British protection and settled at Ludhiana. Dost Mohammed Khan, the strongest of the Barakzais, eventually seized the crown. He was a strong Amir and was approved by the people, and it is always to the interests of the British Empire that the ruler of Afghanistan should be able to rule. Moreover Dost Mohammed showed consistently that he was ready to lean upon England and unwilling to listen to the voice of Russia. French and Russian intrigues to embroil England and Afghanistan had been at work since the days of Napoleon, and now Russia had succeeded in

making a catspaw of Persia, and, lending men and money, had induced her to invade Afghanistan. The Amir appealed to the Governor-General for support, moral and material. Unhappily Lord Auckland had begun his ill-fated rule in the year 1836. For reasons known only to himself, and never yet found capable of explanation, he decided to drive Persia from Herat—so far comprehensible!—*and replace Shah Shuja on the throne.*

There seems to have been no method in this madness. Almost every Anglo-Indian of weight and experience from the Commander-in-Chief downwards was averse from interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs; the Duke of Wellington and military men in England viewed Lord Auckland's policy with equal disfavour; and the directors of the East India Company considered that Dost Mohammed was just such a monarch as they would wish to rule that turbulent land, and that Shah Shuja was the man most likely to cause them trouble. Dost Mohammed was a popular king; Shah Shuja was impossible.

Lord Auckland would not listen, would not delay. He gave the order to advance. The Persians, badly defeated by Eldred Pottinger, a young British officer who chanced to be at Herat, withdrew in haste, and there was nothing to fight about. But Lord Auckland would not be baulked of his shame. Like the man who spends his all in erecting his "folly" as a landmark and eyesore in some conspicuous spot, he seemed resolved somehow to scrawl his name across the page of history. Yet Lord Auckland was an honourable man, conscientious and high-principled, and he had done good work in India. He was, moreover, a man of peace by nature and training, in most affairs cautious and moderate, and for these reasons rather than from any belief in his genius he had been selected for the office. To do him justice Lord Auckland had good intentions—and we know their fate.

On May 8, 1839, Shah Shuja was placed on the throne of Afghanistan by a brilliant feat of arms. Dost Mohammed surrendered voluntarily, and was honourably and kindly treated by the Governor-General. The Russian intrigues had succeeded. They had embroiled the British, embittered the Afghans against their former allies, and had drawn the ablest man in Central Asia unwillingly to their side.

Lord Auckland was no Machiavelli, even in intention—certainly not in execution. No nefarious designs were his; he does not even appear to have been under the delusion that England had anything to gain by this gratuitous quarrel, but somehow the idea had fixed itself in his mind that Shah Shuja had been wronged and that his mission on earth was to play knight-errant. So he issued a manifesto. Premising that he had placed Shah Shuja “on the throne of his ancestors,” he went on to promise that “when once he shall be secured in power and the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British army shall be withdrawn.”

What a grim joke that proclamation must have seemed to poor incapable Shah Shuja and to all who heard or read. *He* knew well enough that the withdrawal of the British bayonets would be the signal for his deposition and probably for his murder. The army, therefore, stayed two years in Kabul, and the position became more and more plainly intolerable. On November 2, 1841, the determination of the Afghans not to submit to British dictation, and the powerlessness of Shah Shuja, were placed beyond doubt by the murder of Sir A. Burnes, the appointed successor to Sir W. Macnaughten, the British envoy. A few days later Macnaughten was also murdered, and the old general in command at Kabul, though by no means deficient in courage, was stricken helpless by the weight of responsibility thrust upon him. He made a bargain on the word of an

Afghan, and, freedom from molestation having been guaranteed, he evacuated Kabul. In the depths of winter the army of 4000 soldiers and 12,000 camp-followers began its retreat.

The story has often been told. How, a week later, the sentry on the ramparts of Jelalabad—the British outpost at the Afghan end of the Khyber—perceived a solitary horseman, half dead from wounds and exposure, struggling towards safety. It was Dr. Brydon, then thought to be the sole survivor of 16,000 men. Afterwards it became known that a handful had been held as captives, and that a few sepoy and followers had escaped. Among the captives was George Lawrence.

A few months previous to the massacre, the *Delhi Gazette* had published a long article from the pen of Henry Lawrence called *Anticipatory Chapters of Indian History*. In the story of *Darby O'Connor* he foretold just such a rising in Afghanistan, and called for a complete reform of the army system. He was the first man in India to know that his predictions had been fulfilled. Promptly on receipt of the news that the envoys had been murdered and that Elphinstone's army in Kabul was in danger—not as yet that it had been destroyed—he took upon himself to prepare for the equipment of a relief force; he urged the authorities to push on certain regiments and to warn others for service, and, had he but had a free hand, would undoubtedly have prevented the disgraceful paralysis that ensued.

But Lord Auckland, whose mad whim had brought about this tragedy, was now incapable of thought or action. He seemed ready to leave Elphinstone's force to its fate; he could hardly be persuaded to move a regiment. Light-heartedly he sent an army to its destruction; he hesitated to do his obvious duty and save the remnant.

Sir John Kaye discovers or suggests one reason for the Governor-General's inaction. An election had just taken

place in England and the Tories, who had supported the East India Company and condemned the war throughout, were now in office, and a newly-appointed viceroy had set sail. "Would it be right then," so Lord Auckland reasoned, "to commit my successor to a renewal of hostilities?" As Kaye scornfully points out, "The time for these considerations had gone by."¹ England was humiliated in the eyes of Asia; her prestige in India was shattered. The choice was between deepening the disgrace and attempting partially to recover our prestige.

The Indian Commander-in-Chief, Sir Jasper Nicolls, having opposed the war, now seemed content to explain that he was in no way to blame. But there were men in the land. Mr. George Clerk supported his assistant, and helped him to assemble a brigade of native regiments from the district under their charge. These would have to march through the Punjab, and the Punjab, nominally the ally of England against Afghanistan, was only awaiting its chance, for the Sikhs did not conceal the elation they felt on hearing of the disaster.

It fell to the lot of Henry Lawrence to prepare the way of the relief force through the four hundred miles of foreign territory between Ferozepore and the Khyber, and he knew that the army of the Khalsa was ready to destroy it at a nod from the Sikh durbar. Everything depended on him who was to go in political charge of the force. The Sikhs were arrogant and ignorant; they were undoubtedly powerful and they knew it; more than one English force was absolutely at their mercy. Most men would have hesitated before selecting "Gunpowder" Lawrence for such a service. "Of all the Assistant-Agents on the border," said Sir Herbert Edwardes, "Lawrence had the hottest temper. But in good truth it was not a time for phlegm; and Mr. Clerk judged well when he passed his

¹ *The Afghan War.*

finger over the arrow-heads and drew the sharpest from his quiver."

The relief force sent by Mr. Clerk consisted of four native irregular regiments under Brigadier Wild; and Lawrence's knowledge of the Sikh character and his growing prestige brought the troops safely to Peshawar, the Gate of India, where they had to wait for the guns. It can hardly be believed that when—as was thought—the fate of some twenty thousand British subjects was at stake, Brigadier Wild was calmly informed that Captain Lawrence must beg some guns from the Sikhs. It was a bitter pill for him to swallow. Here were the ambitious and aggressive soldiers of the Khalsa, bound by treaty to help the British, laughing at the dilemma, jeering at the helplessness of these whites who claimed to be the Great Power of the Eastern world, and urging their sirdars to let them loose upon the Europeans. And Lawrence must needs lay aside his pride and humbly beg the Sikh general for the loan of artillery because the boasted might of Britain was unequal to the task of providing a cannon or two.

The Sikh authorities agreed to make the loan—provided that their gunners were willing. The Sikh gunners were anything but willing, and they said so promptly and in a way that admitted of no doubt, and, naturally enough, General Avitabile declined to precipitate an outbreak by attempting to force his gunners to comply. He invited them to lend their guns, and the Sikh Government expressed the pleasure it would give them to help the incompetent English out of the hole, but, of course, they could not go so far as to order the "Elect" to do that which was evidently distasteful. So Henry Lawrence chafed and fretted, and the iron entered into his soul, as he contemplated the spectacle of his beloved country, and the army to which he was so proud to belong, made a laughing-stock to amuse Sikhs and Pathans, Hindus and Punjabis. "I have eaten

more dirt at Peshawar," he wrote to Mr. Clerk, "than I shall get out of my mouth in the next seven years."

Peshawar stands at the Sikh mouth of the Khyber Pass; Jelalabad, garrisoned by Sale's "illustrious" handful, is at the Afghan end. Peshawar was the most lawless and turbulent town of the East; it had been the prize for the alternate victors in many a battle between Sikhs and Pathans, and, under Ranjit Singh, General Avitabile, the brutal Italian soldier of fortune, had ruled it by fear alone. His atrocities had amazed even Sikhs and Pathans; he had obtained a kind of order, but he had not caused the people to look kindly on Europeans. They were soon to find out that Henry Lawrence and the Neapolitan were men of different mould.

The Sikh soldiers swaggered into the sepoy lines and openly incited them to rebel. They exaggerated the horrors of the Khyber Pass until, after weeks of waiting for the guns and for supplies, the sepoys had no heart left in them. One regiment was on the point of mutiny, and the Brigadier had decided to punish them for example's sake when Lawrence interfered.

He saw deeper into the minds of the native soldiers—felt that they had lost faith in the power of their British officers to protect them or lead them to victory; knew that the other three regiments—the only troops available to inflict punishment—sympathised with the rebels; foresaw what effect a mutiny, even of the passive kind, would have upon the Sikhs. He appealed to the better feelings of the sepoys and saved the situation. Colonel Beecher spoke for his comrades when he said, "We all recognised in him the leading man of the camp."

At length it was decided to respond to the Jelalabad appeals, guns or no guns, and Wild pushed forward to the entrance of the Khyber Pass. And the Sikh allies calmly marched back to Peshawar. A fight was risked, but the

sepoys, cowed and disheartened, did badly, and Captain Lawrence was forced to send a message to Jelalabad to say that no help need be expected for another month.

At length the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, or the two combined, came to the conclusion that the little brigade had better be reinforced. It had not been destroyed, as under the circumstances might have been expected, neither had it shown any intention to retreat. It was therefore a standing reproach to the authorities. So they actually chose as general, one who was, to quote Sir Herbert Edwardes, "not the oldest general alive nor him who had most grandfathers in England," but a really competent leader of men.

The choice was good. General Pollock knew what he wanted done, and how to do it. He made his army efficient, and—this deserves note—he appreciated what Henry Lawrence, the political officer, had done. An advance was made on the arrival of the guns and of the white troops, without whose encouraging presence the sepoy would not have regained their spirits.

With keen regret Captain Lawrence watched the guns disappear into the Khyber Pass. His political duties compelled him to remain at Peshawar, but his heart was with the artillery, and he longed to help work the guns or even pull upon the drag-ropes. For weeks he had been nursing Pollock's army, and doing a thousand and one odd jobs that were not in his department. Having now got the Sikh allies somewhat in hand, he improvised escorts for the baggage and parties of water-carriers to follow when the pass was won and relieve the thirsty troops, and procured a large supply of earthen jars and brass vessels, requisites that had not been provided. When the camel-drivers, frightened by the tales of the Sikhs, ran away with their beasts, he bought more than twelve hundred camels and five hundred bullocks. Then he constituted

himself a Commissariat Department, and foraged for the army's supplies. He also organised a body of men to carry the wounded back to Peshawar, knowing that in the confusion there would be many duties for the carrying out of which no one would be responsible. All such work he took as his own, and the wounded, saved from the Afghan horrors to be cared for in Peshawar, blessed the gaunt political, who was never too weary to visit and chat with them, to look after their comfort, ventilation, and food. Native followers of Elphinstone's annihilated army, who had escaped the Afghan knives, now came straggling in, and he found the time and means to clothe and feed and shelter them. Under his direction, won by his influence, the Sikhs at length began to help rather than to hinder, and he relieved the pressure on Pollock, as that fine soldier forced his way through the pass, by employing against the Afridis the soldiers of the Khalsa—that wonderful army which he, Henry Lawrence, was destined to destroy by turning their swords into ploughshares for the peace and prosperity of the land, and which John Lawrence, seven years later, raised to life again for the saving of India.

Henry Lawrence had hoped to be allowed to accompany Pollock to Jelalabad and even to Kabul, but Mr. Clerk ordered him to remain at Peshawar, while Mackeson, his fellow-political, went forward. However he coaxed Pollock into giving him permission to serve with his old corps until the pass was won. Just before starting Pollock at 3 a.m. paid a visit to Lawrence's tent and found him seized by a sudden attack of illness, so severe that the general did not think he would recover. Pollock went away downcast, and an hour later the force began its advance. Arriving at the mouth of the Khyber whom should he see but Lawrence getting the guns into position—an exhibition of the power of mind over matter similar to that already recorded of John.

"All along the frontier,"¹ wrote Mr. Clerk, "praises are loud of your exertions, alacrity, and spirit. The whole of this I know and reckoned on, and hence I sent you, as Government knew. But it is gratifying to me to observe that you are everywhere thought of in the way which I well know is so much deserved."

He liked to be esteemed; it pleased him to feel that, having done his duty, his work was appreciated. He treated others as he himself liked to be treated, and however worried and oppressed he never omitted to praise the good work of his subordinates. Like John, he could not allow bad work to escape censure, but, unlike his brother, he took pains to let his juniors know when he was well pleased with them. He was especially delighted by a second letter from Mr. Clerk, who, speaking of his success in managing the unruly Sikh soldiery and the lawless Pathan tribes between Peshawar and Jelalabad, had occasion to praise his *patience*, an exotic virtue that could only thrive by strenuous combat with his naturally quick temper.

"Very fine is it not?" he wrote to his wife after receiving Clerk's meed of praise. "It is wonderful what soft snobs we are, and how we like butter better than bread."

No press of work was allowed to disturb the regularity of his correspondence with his wife at Ferozepore, and every Sunday he found time to send a letter to the little lad who bore his grandfather's name. When her husband left for the front Mrs. Lawrence wrote to Mrs. Hayes that, as he was going to help those in danger, she would not have held him back if she had been able, great as her trial must prove. In another letter she said: "Each year I feel but beginning to estimate him; and there is such simplicity in his goodness, such absence of effort, or seemingly of self-denial, in all he does."

When the tidings of the massacre flashed from west to

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 364.

east, the full horrors of the situation were brought before her. For a space the friends of the thousands who had perished clung to the hope that rumour might prove untrue, or, at least, greatly exaggerated, and Honoria Lawrence had to put aside her own trouble. The following extract from a letter to Mrs. Cameron tells its own pathetic story.

“ I am unfit for writing and have got a load of letters to answer, most of them inquiries about husbands and brothers and sons, of whom it is supposed Henry may know something, all to be answered with the same heart-withering intelligence. I feel as if I were shooting arrows in every direction.”¹

One of the slain was her own brother, Captain James Marshall.

In reply to Henry's request that she should not “ fear for me or think I expose myself unnecessarily,” she replied, “ No, my own husband, I do *not* think you forget wife and child when you fly about. I need not talk of my prayers for your safety; but I never wish you safe by keeping out of the way. No, I rejoice you are there, with your energy and sense; and, if I could but be a button on your sleeve, I never would wish you to come away. . . . Who talked of your force turning back? God forbid that such counsel should prevail. . . . Doubly mean would it be now to turn—to run from such a wretched foe, whose force lies in our vacillation—and to turn our backs on our friends in distress. No, my husband, I would not have you back to-morrow on such terms.”² And later: “ It would be my pride and delight to think that you were even a better soldier since you had a wife and son; and God forbid I should throw any obstacle in your road.”

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 273. ² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 311.

CHAPTER X

(1842-1843)

STEPPING STONES

George Lawrence's Captivity—Henry Offers Himself in Exchange—Capture of Kabul and Release of the Prisoners—Henry transferred to the Dehra Dhoon—To Amballa—To Kytul—John in Charge of Kurnal—The Brothers Meet—Henry's Work Appreciated.

WITH Pollock at Jelalabad, the "illustrious garrison" relieved, and gallant Nott straining at the leash in Kandahar, the horizon seemed to be clearing, and hope must have revived in the captives' breasts at the approach of their countrymen. Then the clouds gathered again and the sky was blacker than ever. "By May 26 the credit of the British Government had so fallen in the bazaars of Peshawar, that some camel-men who had to receive fifty thousand rupees from Henry Lawrence as wages refused bills on the British treasury at Ferozepore at 1 per cent. premium; and bought bills from natives in the commissariat at 2 per cent. discount."¹

What had happened to account for this? Had some mighty man of valour arisen among the Afghans? Had the Sikhs at last broken loose, or was sepoy disaffection spreading? Had Pollock's resolution weakened, or Nott's ardour failed him? No, but Lord Auckland was tired of Afghanistan. He had begun the war without weighing the consequences; he was ready to end it with as little consideration. The soldiers' task was a difficult one. "Better

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 373.

leave it alone then," thought the Governor-General. His last instructions to Pollock were to withdraw from Jelalabad with the garrison as quickly as he could.

Lord Ellenborough took over the reins, and the situation confused him also. He vacillated and practically confirmed his predecessor's orders to retire, the work undone and the captives at the mercy of the Afghans. Nott and Pollock were hundreds of miles apart, yet their interpretation of the order was the same. Like Nelson, each applied a blind eye to the instructions and, refusing to see the obvious meaning, nailed his colours to the mast. Britain's honour was at stake; what cared these rival heroes for the Governor-General?

The aim of Nott was to reach Kabul from the south before Pollock could enter it from the east; and Pollock's ambition was to forestall Nott. They refused to retire, and could not go forward in the face of such orders. England's credit sank lower and lower in India and in the Punjab.

The fine spirit shown by his generals reacted on Lord Ellenborough, who, after all, was a soldier at heart, though temporarily confused by his predecessor's gyrations. He hinted that if both Nott and Pollock thought fit to retire *via Kabul* (four hundred miles instead of one hundred) he should not oppose. But the responsibility was to be theirs. He had instructed them to retire; they would be to blame if any disaster occurred during the retirement.

The generals welcomed the responsibility, and once more the Union Jack shook out its folds and the Afghans began to realise that their enemies were not crushed. Thereupon they expressed a desire to treat. Two of their prisoners, George Lawrence and Captain Troup, were sent on parole to Pollock's camp by Akbar Khan, the favourite son of Dost Mohammed and the most capable of the Afghan generals, who possibly imagined that they would make an appeal

to their friends, and that for their sake better terms would be granted. The Carthaginians once made a similar mistake. The prisoners had not been captured in fair fight, but by black treachery; they must be given up unconditionally, and if Akbar Khan preferred to murder them he knew what to expect. George Lawrence and Troup must go back into captivity and trust that fear of the consequences would prevail against disappointed rage in the breast of the Afghan. The envoys approved the decision as consistent with their country's honour, and they returned to Kabul to inflame the passions of Akbar with the news that his scheme had failed.

Though Henry Lawrence had concurred in Pollock's refusal to ensure the safety of the captives by concluding an ignoble peace, he had not forgotten that his brother had a wife and children, loved as devotedly as his own. Sir George Lawrence, in his *Reminiscences of Forty-Three Years in India*, tells that, having been ill from the effects of his confinement, there was some doubt of his ability to keep the promise made to his jailer. "My good and generous brother Henry tried hard to induce me to allow him to take my place while I remained with the army; arguing that if anything fatal happened to him, as he had only one child, it would be of small consequence compared with my death, who had four children. Of course I could not agree to this generous and high-minded proposal."

George asked what Honoria would say if she heard that Henry had offered himself as a hostage to Afghan wrath. "That I was right," Henry replied, and his trust in his wife's nobility was well-founded. Before the captive returned to Kabul he informed his brother's wife that Henry "*as usual*" had tried to sacrifice himself. Read how Honoria Lawrence received the news. "And you offered to go in the stead of George, darling? I am glad you did it, and I am glad there was no time to ask me lest

my heart should have failed. But had you been taken at your word, though my soul would have been rent, yet I should never have regretted, or wished you had done otherwise. George is as much to Charlotte as you are to me. He has five children and you have but one.”¹

Early in September Pollock and Nott dashed at Kabul from the east and from the south, Pollock entering the town as victor on September 16, a day or two before his rival. Lawrence's Sikhs, once so insolent and unruly, now helped in the fight that won Kabul, and the general's despatch admitted that, “The Lahore contingent, under the able direction of Captain Lawrence, has invariably given the most cheerful assistance, dragging the guns, occupying the heights, and covering the rearguard.” Lawrence's affection for the guns had even infected the Sikhs, and he informs his wife, who would probably have preferred to hear of his personal adventures, that “our artillery practice was the admiration of all beholders.”

A few days after the entry into Kabul the captives came in and the war, undertaken in order to place Shah Shuja on the throne, was over; the Governor-General's interference had cost the puppet his life, and in the end it was found that there was no alternative but to crown Dost Mohammed king again.

On December 11, 1842, Mrs. Lawrence wrote to Mrs. Hayes:—

“It was George who mended the pen I have taken in hand to begin this with, beloved sister. Just fancy us all together here—Henry, George, and me . . .” To which her husband adds: “Here is my own beautiful handwriting to certify that I am now in the ‘presence.’ Like a bright particular star I shot past the army at Peshawar. [“We bowled through the Khyber as if it had been the road between Hammersmith and London,” he wrote to Mr.

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 399.

Clerk.] . . . Now let me tell you how lovely and loving I found my precious wife and child, and how in both I am repaid for all my cares and anxieties. She was a good, *most* good wife before, but I'm innocently told by her that she will try and be better now. And my little son, when he rushes to his old papa, and cuddles up to him, shows how his father's name has been instilled into his heart."¹

The Sikh king and court, being greatly pleased with Captain Lawrence's handling of their troops, presented him with a robe of honour and a sword set with emeralds, rubies, and pearls, but the rules of the service did not permit him to retain the presents. To Ferozepore came the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, and many British, native, and Sikh notables, to welcome home the victorious armies of Pollock, Nott, and Sale. Lord Ellenborough had no love for "politicals," but Lawrence's services had been too great to be passed over. Moreover, the new viceroy could not but be struck by the aspect of this town of canvas and of brick that owed its existence to the energies of Mr. Clerk's assistant.

Therefore in January 1843 Henry Lawrence left Ferozepore to become the superintendent of the Dehra Dhoon, a post greatly to be desired by an overworked man. He arrived in this healthy valley at the foot of the great hills only to find that he had been the victim of an exasperating mistake. Lord Ellenborough had discovered in the meantime that the appointment was barred to military officers, so he made a fresh "deal" and transferred him to Amballa (once more in the Cis-Sutlej States) as assistant to the envoy at Lahore. Lawrence consoled himself with the hope that the envoyship itself might soon be his, but when Sir George Clerk was promoted to the governorship of the North-West Provinces disappointment was again in store for him; he had hardly settled down in Amballa when a

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 420-421.

third move became necessary, for he was placed in command of a military expedition sent to quell a disturbance in Kytul, a neighbouring state, and, having effected this in a typically satisfactory manner, he was appointed to administer Kytul. This little affair brought the brothers together after a long interval. John, who had arrived in India with his wife a few months previously, had been appointed Civil and Sessions Judge of his old district of Delhi, and was now in charge at Kurnal, not far from his old post at Paniput and less than fifty miles from Kytul. When therefore Henry was ordered to this place he applied to his brother for men, and John, glad to greet once more his chum and hero of old, accompanied the expedition, and was probably disappointed at the lack of resistance.

Henry had received three new appointments within a few months. None of these had brought him any increase of pay and each had involved him in considerable expense. Then came the last straw, and there was excuse for his belief that Lord Ellenborough was treating him shabbily. He received a letter from the Governor-General, addressed to Major Lawrence, C.B., and naturally jumped to the conclusion that his services had at length been recognised. He opened the packet and was undeceived. Instead of the hoped-for Order of the Bath he found only the Afghan medal, and with some indignation he wrote to express his conviction that he had merited better treatment.

But before the Governor-General could reply in apology for the mistake, a communication arrived from Henry's old friend Mr. Thomason, the Foreign Secretary, in which he learnt that Lord Ellenborough had merely been waiting to honour him in accordance with his merits. He was now appointed Resident in Nepal, a post, not only of great honour, requiring exceptional tact, but also rewarded by a large increase of salary. Mrs. Lawrence had a further reason for rejoicing. The independent kingdom of Nepal

is one of the most healthy and most lovely countries in the world, and the appointment was just such a one as she would have desired for her overworked and harassed husband. Disappointed by the seeming lack of recognition, worn out by fevers, and fearful for the health of their boy, the Lawrences had resolved to go home, and were without the means of paying their passage, when this offer came, bringing with it a salary of Rs. 3500¹ per month, just five times his previous wage. On November 5 he set out for this little known land.

Short though his stay in Kytul had been he had done much there. By the death of the raja without heirs the state had lapsed to the Company, and he found that its affairs had been woefully mismanaged and its people oppressed. By abolishing the farmers of revenue he improved the condition of the peasants; he reduced taxes, did away with forced labour—a curse to the people under the old regime—ran to earth the brigands and dacoits who formerly abounded, administered prompt justice, righted wrongs, punished oppression, and put down bribery and corruption. Wherever he deemed wise he remitted the whole of the land-tax until the cultivator could improve his condition, and in lieu of payment he made the man work for the public good by digging new wells and so adding to the resources of the state. He himself set an example by planting trees broadcast; for, with any quantity of jungle, there was a complete absence of timber. So great and so speedy was the success of his exertions that, before he left for Nepal, the number of ploughs in the state had increased by 50 per cent., and a stream of emigration had set in from the neighbouring districts. All this time he was working under conditions most unfavourable to honest effort. His task was not lightened by the smile of official approval; he believed, and had good

¹ In round figures £350.

grounds for the belief, that he had been unfairly treated; but, though abnormally sensitive to a lack of appreciation, he refused to allow a sense of his wrongs to interfere with the quality of his work.

Kytul was but a little state, and he only ruled it for a few months, but the experience gained there made him more fit to undertake the great work of his life, when called upon to rule the empire created by Ranjit Singh, the Sikh. In like manner John's appointment at Kurnal prepared the way for a higher post. He there pushed forward his favourite reforms—roads and irrigation, improvements in agriculture, in the condition of the women, and a better control of native police and officials generally. Though not the kind of man who habitually decries the native, John had a low opinion of the Oriental in office. The average English official in India has some idea of his responsibility towards those he governs, but the native has none.

Kurnal had recently been visited by a plague and the district was in a wretched state. The cantonment, hitherto considered one of the best in India, had been condemned, more than half the troops having been stricken down. John Lawrence went straight to the root of the evil. Various authorities were inclined to condemn the canals as the cause, and, fearing lest a prejudice against irrigation might set in, he studied the matter closely. Until recently cereals had been the staple food, but of late rice had been cultivated, and the swamps, in which this crop flourishes, had gradually crept up and surrounded the town. To this fact he attributed the epidemic and suggested that no rice-fields should be allowed within four miles of the town. His advice was acted upon, and his remedy was successful.

The soldier brother's term of service had been marked by many changes of place and of character of work: he had been buffeted from pillar to post, from Burma to Kabul, from the Punjab to Nepal. The civilian, on the other

hand, had never been removed far from the Mogul capital, and now an appointment as magistrate and collector of Delhi and Paniput brought him back to the town in which he had been first employed.

It is instructive to note how the two Lawrences were in requisition as pioneers on the fringes of the Company's vast territories, where was most need for strong men. They were rarely set to labour in the fruitful valleys, on well-watered and cared-for soil that had been under cultivation for generations. Theirs it was to take in hand the waste lands, arid, thistle-covered, and weed-choked; with their own hands to root out and destroy the tares, to dig and dress the good soil, and bring water to irrigate the land. Such tasks appealed to them both, but though the brothers had so much in common, a difference in their manner of treating one important problem of Indian administration was already perceptible. Though Henry did not hesitate to take from the native aristocracy such privileges as interfered with the welfare of the common people, and tended to grind them down, he was never wanting in sympathy with a class that found little favour in the eyes of most ardent reformers. It was here that the brothers had to part company and take different ways; here was the root of that difference of opinion which was to form so painful a chapter in their lives. Great was the fall of the nobles when a native state was taken in hand by a man like John Lawrence. In like manner the barons of feudal England and the great lords of the Middle Ages, dispensing the High, the Middle, and the Low Justice, using their power solely to further their own ends, would have received scant sympathy from reformers of the twentieth century with absolute authority to redress the wrongs of the people.

Henry, however, above all men had the power to see through the eyes of others and to place himself in their

position. He held that, little as the nobles seemed to deserve consideration, the fault was less their own than of system and environment. They only acted as taught by their fathers and as did others in their position, and Henry—keen as his brother to stamp out tyranny—understood and, while depriving them of teeth and claws, performed the operation as painlessly as possible, and applied balm to the wounds. His necessary reforms hit the aristocracy hard; they were “down,” and when a man was down he became his friend and did all he could for him without prejudice to the interests of others. When he had to knock some one down he invariably tried to soften the fall. He also saw that it was good policy to alienate as little as possible the most influential classes, and he knew that, east or west, human nature is strong, and strong the force of habit; that in time of trouble the peasants would side with their old oppressors rather than with the foreign benefactors, whose western methods and whose efforts on their behalf they so little understood or appreciated. When the Mutiny shook the land he stood justified.

Happily ignorant of the future, Major and Mrs. Lawrence paid a visit to John and his wife on the way to take up the new post in Nepal. The genuine friendship existing between the brothers had not been affected by the lapse of years, and from what we know of Honoria and Harriette we may safely surmise that each cordially approved the choice of her brother-in-law, that each was glad to welcome the other as a sister.

CHAPTER XI

(1843-1845)

NEPAL AND THE GURKHAS

Nepal—Its Inhabitants—A Barbarous Court—The Gurkhas—Mrs. Lawrence's Letters from Nepal—Literary Work—The Lawrence Asylums.

LEAVING his wife and child with his brother at Kurnal—for no European woman had ever been permitted to enter Nepal—Henry Lawrence reached Khatmandu by the end of November 1843.

The mountainous country known as Nepal extends for six hundred miles along the northern frontier of Hindustan. Its average breadth is about one hundred miles, the highest mountains in the world forming the boundary between it and Thibet. The Valley of Nepal, or *Nepal Proper*, forms an oval about fifty miles in circumference, lovely, fruitful, and densely populated, principally by Newars and Murmis, who are of Mongolian stock, as are the Limbus, Rais, Sunwars, Lepchas, and other aboriginals of Nepal. As regards religion these tribes are all more or less Buddhist, whereas the Gurkhas, who have been the dominant race for more than a hundred years, are nominally worshippers at the shrine of Siva. They are, however, tolerant in religious matters, and one at least of the four Gurkha clans employ Lamas, equally with Brahmans, for priestly functions. The Gurkhas are the descendants of Hill-Rajputs and Mongolian women, and they are subdivided into four clans.

The Thakurs and the Khas, who are the aristocrats of the Gurkha race, claim to have a greater proportion of Rajput

blood flowing in their veins than have the other two clans (Magars and Gurungs), and they wear the sacred thread. The royal family of Nepal belongs to the Thakur clan, and nearly all nobles are either Thakurs or Khas. They make good soldiers.

The Magars and Gurungs are smaller and sturdier men, of a prominent Mongolian type, with a broad face, wide nose, and prominent cheek-bones. These are the two famous fighting clans, the *usl* (real) Gurkhas, for whom the recruiting officer keeps a keen look-out, and in whose favour he often rejects the more regular-featured Khas and Thakurs. The Magars and Gurungs won Nepal for their rulers about the time that Clive was laying the foundations of our empire in the East, and at a later date they began to form the indomitable infantry battalions that have served the British so staunchly. *Johnny Gurkha*, the merry, conceited, little chum of Thomas Atkins in the field and in cantonments, amid snow and ice, in Burmese jungles and on the Delhi Ridge when the cause of the white man seemed lost, is either a Magar or a Gurung. For courage and unswerving loyalty these warrior-clans cannot be surpassed by any troops in the world.

The conquest of Nepal by the Gurkha tribes was marked by revolting cruelty whenever opposition was encountered. Prithi Narayan Sahi, the first Gurkha king of Nepal, was a barbarian; and from his death in 1775 until the murderous usurpation of power—not of the throne—by Jung Bahadur, a few years after Lawrence's departure from Nepal, the court of that country was perhaps the most intriguing and treacherous in Asia. The only hope of retaining power appeared to lie in the destruction of all possible rivals, and no other method of rising to, or retaining, office seemed ever to enter the minds of the ambitious.

This condition of affairs was by no means uncommon in the native states of India, but elsewhere might be seen at

least the veneer of civilisation and a certain dignity. In Nepal the most atrocious crimes and the intrigues of the highest in the land were marked by low comedy accompaniments that would have been laughable had they not been so tragic. Where else could such scenes as these occur?

One day in open durbar the king, the queen, and the heir-apparent—termed *Mr. Nepal*, *Mrs. Nepal*, and *Master Nepal* by the new Resident—began roundly to abuse one another. The king had been pluming himself upon his courage and adroitness in having rid himself of a powerful noble—by the usual method—when the dutiful son exclaimed:

“ You killed Matabur Sing indeed! You would not dare to kill a rat! ”¹

Equally dignified was the royal squabble witnessed by the previous Resident. Being in mourning for the chief queen (Master Nepal’s mother) the court was forbidden horse or carriage exercise, and king and prince were perched on the backs of “ two very decrepit old chiefs.” A quarrel ensued, “ whereupon the heir-apparent abused him [the king] most grossly, and urging his old chief close up to the raja, assaulted him. . . . After scratching and pulling each other’s hair for some time, the son got hold of his father, pulled him over, and down they went, chiefs and all, into a very dirty puddle. The two old nags extricating themselves hobbled away as fast as they could.”²

The madness and wickedness of the court formed the dark side of Nepalese life. It had its bright side. Though Prithi Narayan’s conquest had been marked by atrocities, and though the court was so wicked, the tribes subject to the Gurkhas and the common people of the Valley of Nepal were and are as happy and prosperous as any in Asia. The customs, religious, social, and commercial, of the

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence.*

² Captain Smith’s Narrative.

conquered were not interfered with; there were no oppressive taxes and there was little poverty.

That this should have been so is most strange. A vicious court, a reckless warrior race ruling unfettered by any law, the conquered peasant and artisan castes with neither power nor spirit to resist their Gurkha masters, and yet Colonel Lawrence was able to state that he had not known "a single act of oppression," and that "a happier peasantry I have nowhere seen." Here is another instance of topsy-turvydom. Conscription being in force in Nepal, each male adult Gurkha is called upon to serve in the army for a year. Instead of being paid, *they pay for the privilege*, and more candidates offer to fill the vacancies than can be admitted.

Early in the last century the Gurkhas began to annex the hill-states bordering upon Nepal, in spite of the protests of the Indian Government. They went further, threatened wildly, and—what was harder to bear—also raided British territory. Protest being answered by insult, war was eventually declared, and four columns were sent to drive the invaders back to Nepal.

At once the worthier traits of the Gurkha character asserted themselves. Intrigues ceased; they closed their ranks against a common foe, and, weak in numbers though they were, they resolved to defend the annexed districts. The Gurkha army numbered 10,000 men, ill-armed, untrained, with no cavalry and little artillery. With this they had to defend a frontier six hundred miles in length, to keep down the newly-subjugated races, who alone outnumbered their conquerors, and to meet a British force of 35,000 men.

At Kalunga 600 Magar Gurkhas held 3500 of the Company's troops at bay for months, defeated General Gillespie's column again and again, and forced it to retire and await the arrival of heavy guns. The fortress was then battered

down, and 530 of their comrades having been slain, the remaining seventy decided to retire from Kalunga and help the garrison of Jytak, who made an equally gallant stand.

Finally Ochterlony by fine generalship cornered Amir Sing Thapa, the old Commander-in-Chief, and shut him up. For months the veteran held out until, when his men could be numbered by scores rather than by hundreds, he agreed to evacuate his fort on a promise of the full honours of war. Ochterlony gladly granted the terms, and, paying a handsome tribute to the old lion, allowed him to march out with arms and stores and colours flying. His son, Ranjur Thapa, then surrendered Jytak on the same honourable terms, and Nepal regained its senses. Since the year 1816 the Gurkhas have never fought against the British.

Two things stand out prominently in this war. A knowledge of the intriguing nature of the Nepal court, its treachery, barbarity, vindictiveness, and the known disregard for human life, would justify the expectation that not only would the Gurkhas prove inhuman foes, cruel and treacherous even for Asiatics, but also that England would receive support from the ambitious princes and nobles then in disgrace at court, or from those whose fathers, brothers, or sons had been murdered by the men in power. There were Gurkha exiles under British protection, men who had lost estates and wealth, and had barely escaped with their lives, but they refused either to raise a hand against their country or to give information that might be useful to the English. Apparently they argued that amongst themselves intrigue was a fair game, but that to help foreigners even against their rivals would not be playing according to the rules. Never before in Asia had the British come in contact with so high a sense of honour—and this where it was least expected.

Then, instead of proving inhuman, the Gurkhas dis-

closed themselves as most chivalrous foemen. They spared and tended the British wounded and captives, and displayed absolute trust in the good faith of their enemies, for their wounded walked into the British camps and coolly explained that they wished to be treated by skilled doctors, so that they might soon be fit to fight again. Altogether many theories were upset. Their conduct during the campaign was appreciated, and from the ranks of our former enemies two corps were raised at the close of the war. These are now the 1st and 2nd Gurkha Rifles, regiments with untarnished histories. Whatever may have been the vices of the Nepal court, the Gurkha soldier has proved simple, truthful, and honest, rather thick of skull, but skilful in fight and in the chase, genial and merry, and, though ferocious when aroused, easily controlled by an officer who has won his respect.

The Valley of Nepal could only be reached from Hindustan through the malarious Terai or by strictly guarded passes. Even to this day no European is allowed to enter without a permit from the Gurkha Prime Minister, and a passport is not easily obtained. Trading with the outside world is thus restricted, and the enlistment of Gurkhas in the Indian army was for a long time discouraged by the Government of Nepal. Until recently the supply of recruits for the Gurkha battalions depended largely upon the enthusiasm and *esprit de corps* of men who were home on leave from their regiments, and upon the exertions of the recruiting officer at Gorakhpur and other border fairs frequented by adventure-loving Gurkhas. The Magars and Gurungs are eager enough to see active service under capable leaders.

Amid this strange race Henry Lawrence took up his abode, and in spite of Nepalese exclusiveness he so impressed the semi-barbarians by straightforward dealing, evident goodwill towards them, and a consistent refusal

to join or take sides with any of the factions, that an exception was made in favour of so good a man, and Mrs. Lawrence and "Tim" were granted leave to reside in the country.

The new Resident was humble enough to beg advice from the two men best qualified to give it. These were his old friend and master, Sir George Clerk, and Mr. James Thomason, who had succeeded Clerk, and who was perhaps the ablest and most distinguished Lieutenant-Governor the North-West Provinces ever had. The following extracts from their replies set forth the character of the work expected from a Resident, and do honour to the writers and tend to justify the pride with which Englishmen are wont to regard their countrymen's government of the dependency.

"Your duties at Nepaul will be twofold," wrote Mr. Thomason, "viz., to watch any movements on their part, which may be injurious to us, and to offer counsel to them in all State matters in which we may not be concerned, whenever such counsel is sought, or is likely to be acceptable and useful. In the first duty you will have to keep the mean between too great confidence and too ready suspicion. . . . The establishment of such an influence as shall make his [the Resident's] advice solicited and desired is not to be reduced to rule, or inculcated by precept. Most perfect openness and honesty, I believe to be the first requisite. Evenness of temper, courtesy of demeanour, the absence of dictation or obtrusiveness, are qualities which naturally suggest themselves to the mind of all. We profess to leave the Nepaulese entirely to govern themselves. . . . But the Government would be ill represented if every valuable opportunity were not used to prompt to that which is good, and to deter from that which is evil; to express abhorrence of acts of cruelty, perfidy, injustice; to give full approbation of all that is benevolent,

honest, high-minded, and just. . . . But all must be open and above board. We can never match the Natives in intrigue; and when we attempt to meet their machinations by counter-intrigue, we shall be foiled and discredited.”¹

“I do not think you need hints from me,” Sir George replied. “I know few who are so just in their views of what conduct should be, man to man. . . . I fancy you have perceived the right line for you to take in Goorkha politics, to let people alone and keep aloof, but aloof with all courtesy. . . . A Native Minister is never the worse for the advice (given quietly and unobtrusively) of a British Resident, supposing the latter a proper man; and nine times out of ten he feels obliged for it. The mischief is, that we are so elated when such advice produces good consequences, that we hasten to make manifest our influence, exhibit the Minister in leading-strings, and thus kicking down all his popularity amongst parties, destroy his efficiency; and then we cast about for another! . . .

“Matabur Sing is now sole Minister. I think I should be with such an one very guarded that my conduct should be, to him especially (as, indeed, is best towards all Indian politicians), straight-forward but courteous; unyielding in grave matters, but accommodating in minor ones.”

The advice was just what Henry Lawrence himself would have given to a younger man, and in his dealings with “Mr. and Master Nepal,” with Matabur Sing and his nephew Jung Bahadur²—greatest of Shikarris, and, though a

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. i. pp. 459-462.

² After the conquest of the Punjab Jung Bahadur came to England to learn the secret of Britain's strength. Later he became Prime Minister and Autocrat of Nepal, and was knighted and granted new territory as a reward for his help when the Bengal sepoy mutinied. During the visit of the then Prince of Wales to India in 1877 Sir Jung Bahadur gave the prince the best sport he had seen. He introduced many reforms, upon which his nephew, the present Prime Minister, has improved. There are now in Khatmandu good schools, hospitals for women and for lepers, and many other signs of advanced civilisation. Nepal is still closed to Europeans, very few of whom have ever seen the country.

murderer, a man to whom Nepal and England owe a debt—he was ever straightforward and courteous, open and above-board, tactful but unyielding, and he gained the confidence of the Gurkhas. So much so that when he raised the Corps of Guides Jung Bahadur sent him a hundred men to form the first company; and in 1857, on Henry Lawrence's application, he himself marched to Lucknow and joined Sir Colin Campbell with 10,000 Gurkhas.

At a later date Mrs. Lawrence had occasion to write to Sir George Clerk on Nepal affairs. The letter shows her grasp of frontier politics and her knowledge of character. Here is her opinion of the minister who succeeded the murdered Matabur Sing.

“He is a timid nervous creature, who seems to live with a drawn sword over his head, in every point a contrast to poor Matabur. . . . He always gets a *pain in his stomach* when he is summoned to Durbar and feels afraid to go. The man with real influence is Guggur Sing. . . . Jung Bahadoor, Matabur's nephew, is likewise a general, and called commander-in-chief. He takes no very prominent part just now, and seems to spend his energies in devising new uniforms. But he is active and intelligent, and if (perhaps it would be more correct to say, *when*) there is another slaughter in the Durbar, the struggle will probably be between Jung Bahadoor and Guggur Sing.”

Even the Maharaja of Nepal seems to have felt some shame when contrasting Lawrence's open nature with his own. “The Rajah never was so civil to Lawrence as for the last two or three months, when they met on the road, getting out of his palkee and walking with him—almost apologising for Matabur's murder, saying he had warned the general and expostulated in vain, and that at last it was plain *both* could not live.” When the Sikhs invaded British territory unrest prevailed in Nepal. “There was vast talk about the Rajah increasing the number of his

regiments, but I fancy this has ended in the manufacture of 3000 skullcaps for the soldiers already forthcoming, at least *tailors* seemed more in request than officers at Nepaul. The Rajah has repeatedly offered 5000 of his troops to aid us against the Sikhs, and Lawrence would be very glad if 500 of them were taken to serve with our army, as hostages for the troops at Nepaul. You know his opinion of that army, that they would be a formidable defensive force in their own strong country, but very insignificant invaders without either cavalry or guns (they *have* plenty of guns, but could not easily move them), and there is not a man of them who ever saw a shot fired; yet, really, people in the plains talk of the Nepaul horsemen just as of the Afghan. I wish you could have seen some of the riders, when Matabur insisted on the officers being mounted, and every bazaar in the neighbouring plains was ransacked for tattoos. It *was* formidable when we were out in the carriage of an evening, and met a few colonels and *Komadans* holding hard on their vicious brutes that utterly refused to obey the rein, squeezing almost against the carriage wheels, while the rider, in a flurry of politeness and fright, kept, ‘*Salam, Sahib, salam—nyaghora, sahib—bohut tez.*’¹

“It would puzzle a professor of political economy to account for such a lying and murderous Durbar, such an inoffensive army, and such a prosperous, well-fed, well-clothed, well-lodged population, all crowded into that bit of a valley.”²

On January 24, 1845, a second son was born, the late Sir Henry Waldemar Lawrence, the first Christian child born in Nepal. Mrs. Lawrence was dangerously ill, yet, having seen death face to face, she could write to her friend, Mrs. Cameron: “Mary, our trust in Jesus is no delusion . . .

¹ “*Salaam, sir, salaam—a new horse—very fresh.*”

² *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 39-42.



GURKHAS.

if we live to rear these little ones He has given us, may we bring them up as for Him."

Henry Lawrence had been appointed Resident of Nepal partly because the state of his health—enfeebled by exceptional zeal in the service of his country—called for rest and quiet. But he was not content to repose. For nearly twenty years he had toiled without ceasing, and now had come a chance for ease. His duty restrained him from interference in the internal affairs of Nepal. His own account of his state of health at this time is set forth in a letter to an assurance company at Calcutta.

"I often ail, but, with the exceptions above noted, do not remember having been confined to my bed for a day since 1826. My habits are extremely abstemious. I keep very early hours, eat sparingly, and scarcely touch wine, beer, or spirits. I believe I can stand fatigue of mind or body with any man in India. I have repeatedly ridden eighty and a hundred miles at a stretch at the hottest season of the year; and I have for weeks worked twelve and fourteen hours a day at my desk. Here I have almost a sinecure, and have no possible temptation to try my strength."

To remain a mere spectator was not in his power, and he turned to literature as an outlet for the pent-up energy. He now wrote a Defence of Sir William Macnaughten, the late envoy at Kabul, who had been blamed as the originator of an Afghan policy of which he was merely the exponent. It was not in Lawrence's nature to allow an unjust imputation to rest upon any man's head without an attempt to right the wrong, and this "defence" was drawn up with the idea of solacing the widow of the murdered envoy. The document is chiefly remembered now for the passages that foreshadowed the rising of 1857, throwing blame upon the blind self-confidence that characterised British policy in India, the unpreparedness for disaffection, the

lack of supplies, the weakness of the British garrisons, and "the neglect of all recognised rules for military occupation."

His chief literary work appeared in the *Calcutta Review*, edited by Sir John Kaye, who has told how Major Lawrence came to publish his views upon military and social problems.

"It had occurred to me, then residing in Calcutta, to establish a review, similar in form and character to the *Edinburgh*, the *Quarterly*, and the *Westminster Reviews*, but devoted entirely to Indian subjects and questions. It was a bold and seemingly a hopeless experiment, and I expected that it would last out a few numbers and then die, leaving me perhaps a poorer man than before. Its success astonished no one more than myself. That it did succeed is, in no small measure, attributable to the strenuous support of Henry Lawrence."¹

He was not in time to help with the first issue, but promised to write regularly. His first contribution dealt with Punjabi history, and after that he had two or three papers in each number. "His fertility indeed was marvellous. I have a letter before me, in which he undertook to supply to one number four articles, comprising a hundred and ten pages. His contributions were gravid with matter of the best kind—important facts accompanied by weighty opinions and wise suggestions. But he was always deploring, and not without reason, his want of literary skill. This want would have been a sore trial to an editor, if it had not been accompanied by the self-knowledge of which I have spoken. There was indeed a charming candour and modesty about him as a writer: an utter absence of vanity, opinionativeness, and sensitive egotism about small things. He was eager in his exhortations to the editor to 'cut and prune.' . . . On one

¹ *Lives of Indian Officers*, pp. 288-290.

occasion, but one only, he was vexed by the manner in which the editorial authority had been exercised. In an article on the 'Military Defence of our Indian Empire,' which, seen by the light of subsequent events, has quite a flush of prophecy upon it, he insisted, more strongly than the editor liked at the time, on the duty of a Government being at all times prepared for war. Certain events, then painfully fresh in the public mind, had given the editor somewhat ultra-pacific tendencies, and in the course of the correspondence he must have expressed his opinions over-strongly, by applying the epithet 'abominable' to certain doctrines which Lawrence held more in favour. 'When you know me better,' he wrote in reply, 'you will not think that I can advocate anything abominable.' And nothing was more true. The contributor was right, and the editor was wrong. . . . He continued to the end of his life to contribute at intervals to this publication, and was, when the rebellion of 1857 broke out, employed on a review of the *Life of Sir John Malcolm*, which he never lived to complete.

"In his literary labours at this time Henry Lawrence was greatly assisted by his admirable wife, who not only aided him in the collection and arrangement of such of his facts as he culled from books, and often helped him to put his sentences in order, but sometimes wrote articles of her own, distinguished by no little literary ability, but still more valuable for the good womanly feeling that imbued them. . . . In her writings, indeed, she generally appealed to her own sex, with a winning tenderness and charity, as one knowing well the besetting weaknesses of humanity and the special temptations to indolence and self-indulgence in such a country as India . . . and seldom or never did a month pass without bringing me, as I laboured on in Calcutta, a bulky packet of manuscript from one or other—or both."

Their contributions included, *The Sikhs and Their Country*, *Kashmir*, *Military Defence*, *Romance and Reality*, *The Kingdom of Oude*, *Mahratta History and Empire*, *Carriage for Sick and Wounded*, *English Children in India*, and *English Women in Hindustan*.

As Major Lawrence and his wife sat in their balcony at Khatmandu, drinking in the pure bracing air, and rejoicing in the beauty around them, their hearts went out to the little ones in the plains, the children of the European soldiers, who were being dragged about from cantonment to cantonment, their strength and energy sapped by the sun, wasted by fever, sickening in the stifling night time; and their desire to benefit and safeguard the children now began to take definite shape. Often had their own eyes turned with longing to the hills; now the desire had come, and each day they were able to look out upon the everlasting hills, glittering white peaks piled range upon range in fantastic turrets and pinnacles. Sunset and sunrise revealed glories hitherto undreamt of; the cool breath of the snows was theirs to enjoy, and strength returned to the enfeebled frames. But in their own present happiness they did not close their eyes to the miseries of others, nor make the contrast a completer joy. The cry of the little ones rang in their ears—the awful mortality of the children, their British birthright lost to the few who survived, the strength of body and the moral fibre weakened. Bad enough for boys was the barrack life; infinitely worse for the girls. Every one regretted that it was so—and there the matter had stayed, until Henry Lawrence resolved that something not only *could* but *should* be done. He wrote from Nepal to the Governor-General's military secretary to beg for Government sanction and approval of the scheme he and Mrs. Lawrence had planned.

He proposed that a home for the children of soldiers

should be established in the hills, to be supported mainly by voluntary contributions; orphans to be admitted free, and, where possible, part of the cost to be borne by parents; Bible instruction to be given to *all*, but arrangements to be made by which the children of Roman Catholics and Non-conformists might be instructed by teachers of their own sects; the Government to assist by making the advantages of the institution known as widely as possible in each regiment, and the principal civil and military officers at the nearest station to be associated in the management with five persons selected by subscribers. A donation of a hundred rupees or an annual subscription of twenty-four rupees should entitle to a vote; the men of a regiment could club their subscriptions and claim votes in proportion to the total amount.

Major Lawrence had not been able to put by any of his previous earnings, but this did not deter him from giving five thousand rupees (£500) to launch his project, and subscribing one thousand rupees per annum.

In due course the Government threw cold water on the scheme, and the official reply quoted the views of various officers, who had been consulted, by which "he would perceive that his plan was not feasible." Lawrence interpreted these soldiers' expressions of opinion in a different sense and "saw nothing of the kind." He persevered and obtained substantial offers of assistance. In March 1846 while the Sikh war was in progress he convened a meeting and explained his views to a number of officers, including the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough, Sir Harry Smith, Colonels Havelock, Birch, and Grant, and Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes, his dear friend and disciple.

The meeting heartily approved the scheme, and the fate of the Lawrence Asylum was assured. Sanawar, beautifully and healthfully situated in the hills near Simla, was

fixed upon as the site for the original home. In course of time "Lawrence Asylums" were established in various hill districts, where alone European children can thrive, and the good, moral and physical, derived from the asylums by the white children in India has been incalculable.

CHAPTER XII

(1845-1846)

THE SIKHS

Lord Hardinge and John Lawrence—History of the Sikhs—Sikh Aggression—Both Henry and John are needed—Defeat of the Sikhs—Gulab Singh and Kashmir.

As magistrate and collector of Delhi and Paniput John Lawrence first attracted the attention of one who had the power to make or mar. Henry's name was known far and wide, but John's work had not brought him prominently before the eye of authority. Two at least of the three Governors-General, under whom he had held office, had appreciated the genius of the elder brother, but in all probability none of the three was aware of the existence of John Lawrence. But now a new ruler came to India, Sir Henry Hardinge, a famous soldier, the favourite of the Duke of Wellington, and a man beloved for his chivalry, his courage of the highest type, and his real goodness of heart. Thoroughly resolved to do his duty in his high calling the new Governor-General began to acquire knowledge by personally inspecting the frontiers. Not a mere sight-seeing parade but an honest attempt to learn more of the conditions and modes of life of the people set under him, and, being a soldier, to make sure that no steps had been neglected to provide against the dreaded Sikh invasion. While in the Delhi district he was greatly impressed by the ability and sagacity, energy, resource, and thoroughness of the magistrate, and before they had been

together for many hours they had begun to understand and appreciate one another. The time was close at hand when Sir Henry Hardinge, in need of *the* man for a most important duty, gave the order, "*Send me John Lawrence!*"

A month later the inevitable war broke out. In December 1845 a Sikh force of more than one hundred thousand soldiers and camp followers, with a hundred and fifty pieces of heavy artillery, crossed the Sutlej and challenged England to a fight for supremacy on the Indian continent, and Henry Lawrence was summoned post-haste from Nepal. The man who knew most about the Sikhs was needed, and the Governor-General had studied Lawrence's essays on the Punjab in the *Calcutta Review*.

The Sikhs are a sect, not a race. In the early years of the sixteenth century the *Guru* Nanuk rose up in the Punjab to denounce the idolatry of modern Hinduism and to teach a purer faith. Nanuk was a man of saintly life and doctrine and his many followers became known as Sikhs, from the Sanskrit *Sishya* (a disciple). The *Guru* (high-priest) held that Mohammedans served the same Supreme Being under another name. Recognising the element of truth in each of the two chief religions of Hindustan, he applied himself to build a purer faith out of both, and he preached the unity of the Godhead, universal toleration and benevolence, and strict morality. He swept away the incubus of caste, and taught that in the eyes of God high and low are one.

The first *Guru* was a man of such purity, humility, and charm of character that Mohammedans willingly acknowledged him a prophet of God, and, on his death, a dispute arose as to whether his body should be burned as a Hindu or buried as a Mussulman. There is something ironical in the reflection that, in spite of the common belief in one God and antagonism to idolatry, this attempt to unite with the Mohammedans only resulted in the deadliest

hatred between the two sects—a hatred which has in no wise abated.

The first Mogul emperor, Baber, had too much on his hands to pay close attention to the insignificant new sect, and during the glorious reign of Akbar the tolerant, and also under Jehangir and Shah Jehan, the Sikhs were free from persecution. It was not until a much later date that the brotherhood was destined to develop military tendencies of such a nature as to cause alarm to the Mogul rulers. But towards the close of the seventeenth century, when the fanatical zeal of Aurungzebe had developed into a mania, the attempts of that monarch to suppress the Sikhs resulted in a corresponding enthusiasm on their part, and they clung to their faith more tenaciously than ever. That the obstinate sect might be finally disposed of, the emperor caused Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, to be tortured and executed. From that moment the Sikh religion became militant.

The new Guru, Govind Singh, son of Tegh Bahadur, impelled by revenge, devoted his followers to worship of the sword. He proclaimed liberty, equality, and fraternity; he commanded them to add the name Singh (lion) to their other names, to keep their heads and beards unshorn, to wear blue garments, to avoid tobacco in every form (though the use of bhang and opium was not forbidden), and always to carry a sword. He allowed them to eat any flesh save that of the cow and also abolished caste, foreseeing the strength that this would give his forces by establishing unity of aim. The very distinctive community thus created he named the *Khalsa* (the "Elect" or the "Chosen People"). Members were admitted by a kind of baptismal rite, when an oath was taken not to worship images, never to do obeisance to any other than a Guru, and never to turn the back on a foe.

Govind Singh refused to appoint a successor, but gave

instructions that after his death the Sacred Book—the *Granth*—should for all time be considered the Guru of the Sikhs. By this time their creed was less simple and austere than as taught by Nanuk. They were no longer the eclectic sect that their founder had intended, for they had resumed many of the ignoble practices of the community from which they had broken. In some respects, however, no change had occurred. They still regarded graven images with scorn and rendered the same complete submission to their Guru. Over and over again it is impressed in the *Granth* that, "The Guru is guide; the word of the Guru is law."

In the present day there is an undoubted tendency on the part of the Sikhs to revert to Vaishnavism. An ever-increasing number now observe Hindu ceremonies and festivals, and even consider it worth while to conciliate the Hindu deities, and the exclusiveness of caste is no longer unknown to them. A very long time must elapse, however, before complete absorption takes place.

The vast majority of converts to the Khalsa were Jats, a fair number of Khattris or northern Rajputs being attracted, but few Mohammedans or pure Rajputs. The Jats, who are the most important race of the Punjab and of the Rajput States, are sturdy husbandmen and yeomen, and are believed by some authorities, including Tod, to be descended from the *Getae* of the Greeks, a Scythian tribe which helped to overthrow the Graeco-Bactrian power, and which, it is supposed, settled in Northern India after the Indo-Scythian or Turanian invasion, about 100 B.C. Our information regarding this race under the name of the *Yueh-chi* is chiefly drawn from Chinese sources.

The relationship of the *Yueh-chi* to other races has been much discussed; by some they have even been identified with the Goths. Professor Max Müller, however, considers this derivation of the Jats "not proven," and

Dr. Trumpp regards them as descendants of the first Aryan settlers in the Indus valley. Their language, which is of Sanskrit origin, certainly favours his view.

No sooner had Govind Singh created the Khalsa than a sanguinary struggle against the paramount power ensued. Aurungzebe, however, was too strong a man, and though the Sikhs were knit closer together and their military capabilities brought out, they seemed to make but little impression on the Mogul power. Aurungzebe died in the year 1707, whereupon the Hindu leaders in all quarters of the empire, foreseeing the decline of the Mogul rule, waxed aggressive. Bahadur Shah, the new emperor, was soon weighed in the balances against his predecessor and found wanting.

Within twelve months of the death of Aurungzebe, Govind Singh, the tenth and last of the Chief Gurus, met his fate at the hands of two Pathan brothers in settlement of a blood feud. This did not tend to lessen the religious animosity, and the struggle for independence waxed fiercer and fiercer. The quondam religious brotherhood, after defeating one of the governors of the empire, sacked the town of Sirhind with atrocious accompaniment.

This success augmented the Sikh ranks considerably, all the outcasts of the Punjab, as well as numbers of low-caste Hindus, finding it profitable to become converted. Bahadur Shah, that he might have a free hand in dealing with this new element, hastened to conciliate the Hindu princes by concessions calculated to make his bigoted predecessor turn in his grave. This accomplished, the Sikhs were for a time kept under, and for a lengthy period they suffered persecution with great firmness—thousands being executed with torture rather than forsake their creed.

During the second half of the eighteenth century the Sikh organisation improved in a wonderful manner. The

various districts gathered themselves into confederacies known as *misls*, under capable leaders, and successfully resisted both Mogul and Afghan invaders, and about the year 1780 the dominion of the Khalsa was paramount in the Punjab, Pathan attacks were less frequent and less dangerous, while the Mogul Empire had become but a shadow of its former might. The brotherhood had formally assumed the character of a nation, and had issued coinage from which the name of the Mogul ruler was absent.

But now a power, mightier by far than the Sikhs, was advancing, inexorable as fate, its boundaries spreading more rapidly than theirs in all directions. Inevitable it seemed that a terrible shock must result at some not distant date, but through the wisdom of Ranjit Singh the blow did not fall until the middle of the nineteenth century. This future maharaja was the son of a sirdar of one of the *misls*. He was born in 1780, and in his twentieth year was already regarded as one of the foremost chieftains. In his early days he was probably greatly influenced by the careers of his father's contemporaries, Madhaji Sindhia and Mulhar Rao Holkar, who had risen to sovereignty from a position similar to his; the former, indeed, having just failed to snatch the dominion of India, a failure largely due to the jealousy of the rival house of Holkar.

Ranjit Singh proved more sagacious, if perhaps less brilliant, than the Mahratta princes; and by the year 1812 he had by force, cunning, or persuasion brought most of the sirdars under his sway. Possessing all the qualities of a leader himself, he saw that his material was the finest in India, and to disarm jealousy he took good care to proclaim that he acted always as the servant of Govind and of the Khalsa. The popularity which this brought him amongst the soldiers did not turn his head, for, unlike most Eastern conquerors, he was able to perceive his own limitations. Fond of power as he was, his sagacity never

misled him as to the futility of any attempt to measure himself against the British, with whom he remained in friendship until his death in 1839.

Having repeatedly defeated the Afghans, he turned his attention to the rajas of the petty hill states; then in 1818 he captured Multan. The next year he expelled the Afghans from Kashmir and annexed that kingdom, and a little later again defeated them and took Peshawar. This aroused the Pathan tribes to intense fury. *Jehad* was preached by the mullahs, religious wars ensued, and for many years the Khalsa warriors were hotly engaged, rarely without complete success. In 1838, however, Dost Mohammed, the new amir, swiftly gathered together a large army and defeated the Sikhs before Peshawar; but the Barukzai chief had to withdraw without taking the town.

The "Lion of the Punjab"—one of the most remarkable figures of the East—died in the following year. Commerce, industry, and art had not been encouraged by his rule; his whole attention had been given to the creation of a military nation out of the loosely organised *misl*s, and the fighting machine thus produced is without a rival in Indian history. His co-religionists numbered less than 2,000,000, yet he had brought under their sway nearly 20,000,000 people.

Following close upon his death came the First Afghan War, and the mismanagement and consequent disasters aroused in the Sikh mind the idea that their late ruler had been mistaken with regard to the invincibility of the British. The traditions of Ranjit Singh luckily remained fresh, and the new government stood loyal and even allowed the passage of troops through their country. But, later, the usual disputes and intrigues arose as to the succession, and a state of anarchy followed the assassination of several of the claimants. The nation becoming restive,

the influence of the militant anti-British party increased, and troops were moved towards the frontier. The British, anxious to avoid collision, viewed these movements with apprehension, and strengthened their forces. Exaggerated accounts of these preparations filled the Sikhs with alarm, and, further anarchy prevailing, the Sikh army became insubordinate and shortly took the real power of the state into its own hands. In December 1845 the war party could no longer be restrained; the Sikhs crossed the Sutlej and war was declared. At once the insubordination ceased, and the army of the Khalsa returned to its old discipline and loyalty.

Now had come the opportunity for Henry and John Lawrence to prove that those qualities, which had served the state so well in matters parochial by comparison, equally fitted them to rule an empire. Henceforward the name of Lawrence will be for ever linked with that of the Sikh nation, of whom they were in turn foemen, conciliators and counsellors, judges, rulers, leaders, and demi-gods.

The opening battles of Mudki and Ferozshah were hotly contested. The Sikhs retired across the Sutlej to recruit, and the British force, though victorious, had received a staggering blow, the loss in killed and wounded at Ferozshah alone numbering two thousand five hundred. The enemy disgraced their valour by gross treachery and barbarity. Chief among the British losses was the death of Major Broadfoot, the distinguished soldier of Jelalabad, who had been appointed envoy at Lahore.

Quick came the call to Henry Lawrence to replace the loss.

"You are required forthwith," wrote Mr. Currie, the Governor-General's secretary, from the camp at Ferozpor. "You should make over your charge to your assistant . . . and *come with all despatch* to this place. . . . *Come quickly.* . . . I have no time for more; lose no time in coming."

Henry Lawrence was not the man to lose time. He received the message at seven p.m. on January 6, 1846, and by three p.m. next day he had set forth. The hurried parting was the harder for husband and wife because Mrs. Lawrence and the two boys were shortly to set out for England. "I wished for many reasons to delay a week," he wrote in his *Nepal Journal*, "but I ought to go at once. . . . My wife, my darling wife will support herself and believe that He, Who brought us together, and has kept us midst many dangers and many partings, can and will protect us still. May we both trust in our Saviour and endeavour to show our trust by our conduct."

At the same time came the turn of the younger brother. Sir Henry Hardinge remembered the magistrate and collector of Delhi, with whose qualifications and capability he had been so pleased, and he sent a message to John Lawrence to come to the aid of the sorely-pressed army. How proud would Alexander Lawrence have been had he lived to know that when India was in need of her best men the choice should fall upon two of his sons. The mother was happy to catch a glimpse of her "best-beloved's" fame, and a glimpse only, before she died.

A reverse at Budhowal and a victory at Aliwal followed close upon the battle of Ferozshah, and in both these fields the Sikhs fought like heroes. A week or two later Gough crushed the Khalsa at Sobraon and the First Sikh War was over.

Sobraon might have been another Mudki or Ferozshah had John Lawrence been less thorough. He it was who had collected and sent forward the huge train of supplies and the heavy guns which made Sobraon a decisive battle. More than once had he striven in vain to reform the wretched system by which supplies, draught vehicles and animals, and the necessary thousands of drivers and camp-followers were obtained. The mortality of transport

animals was always heavy, and owing to the hopeless dishonesty of the natives employed to contract for supplies, and the difficulty of checking fraud by the overworked English officials in such times of hurry and bustle, owners of good animals were naturally reluctant to supply the army. The expenditure became reckless—for animals must be forthcoming whatever the cost—and when sufficient had been collected and the order given to march, the drivers had a habit of deserting in thousands. Yet John Lawrence succeeded in spite of the fact that his district had already been drained. He provided four thousand carts, drawn by twenty-four thousand oxen, took care that the owners were compensated, and inspired the seven thousand native drivers and servants with such confidence that the number of desertions was insignificant, and the huge convoy arrived in time to turn the scale.

Henry Lawrence had his share also in Sobraon. Present as a political, he somehow found his way to the guns and helped to direct the operations of his old corps.

The Khalsa had been badly beaten, and the Punjab was at the disposal of the East India Company whose territory had been so wantonly invaded. Advocates of annexation were not wanting and their arguments were reasonable. The Sikhs had shown conclusively their hatred of the English by their ferocity towards the wounded—a striking contrast to the chivalry displayed by the Gurkhas in the Nepal War. That they would prove bad neighbours was plain enough, argued the annexationists. The soldiers of the commonwealth had shown that they were masterless men, scornful of their nominal rulers, and they were not likely to settle down in peace until the English should prove that they were beyond doubt their masters, and until a strong, just rule should be set up to displace the intriguing puppets who played at governing in Lahore.

On the other hand the East India Company evinced

its usual distaste for the acquisition of new territory accompanied by increased responsibility, anxiety, and outlay. Sir Henry Hardinge, who had himself fought with the bravest, and whose gallantry at Ferozshah had helped to turn the tide, was against annexation, and his own views were strengthened by the influence of Henry Lawrence, now a power in the land. The Sikhs were *down*, they were humbled, and Lawrence placed himself in their position. Had Ranjit Singh's Ironsides been still unbroken, had they shown any disposition further to dispute our prowess, a Lawrence would have been the last to advocate withdrawal. "There is," he wrote later to the Governor-General, "all the difference in the world between voluntarily restoring a country at a period of perfect peace, and abandoning it when pressed or even threatened with danger."

Though his wisdom did not ignore the likelihood of a fresh trial of strength as soon as the Punjab should, with its wonderful elasticity, recover from the Sobraon blow, he maintained that the Sikhs should be given another chance. To teach and guide the Lahore durbar, to give proof of a desire for the welfare and prosperity of the Punjabis, to allow them to see that Englishmen are not bound by the motives that rule Asiatics, all this he advised, and Hardinge believed in Henry Lawrence.

The Sikhs needed a lesson however; nor could the danger of renewed conflict be ignored by a statesman. So the Governor-General annexed the Jalandar Doab, a tract of fertile country between the Sutlej and the Beas, and also the Trans-Sutlej Hill States conquered by Ranjit Singh. These provinces would be comparatively easy of administration; the people—of whom only a small minority are Sikhs—would not be averse from the change of masters; and the new territory would be of strategic importance should the Khalsa once more pit itself against the Company.

In accordance with the custom of war the vanquished aggressors were mulcted with a proportion of the victors' costs. This fine the Sikhs were unable to pay, and in lieu of cash other of Ranjit Singh's conquests, including that earthly paradise, the Vale of Kashmir, were withdrawn from their allegiance to Lahore. Unhappily—most unhappily for the miserable Kashmiris—the Company's dread of increased responsibility combined with the difficulty of administration, cut off as it was by the Punjab from British India, led the directors to barter away that lovely and healthy country. Gulab Singh, the Dogra ruler of Jammu, stepped forward and offered to pay the fine and—so great was his love for the English—he would take Kashmir off their hands and relieve their anxiety. Gulab Singh was famous for his ability to take care of himself. He was one of the three Dogra brothers whose influence over Ranjit Singh had been so great; he was the one powerful chieftain left of Ranjit Singh's sirdars; he was the most influential man of the Lahore durbar; and he holds a more prominent place than any other native in the story of Henry Lawrence, who was often chaffed about his "protégé." Even Herbert Edwardes abused Gulab Singh unmercifully to his protector, and no one could understand what seemed to be an alliance between Vice and Virtue.

Gulab Singh had held aloof during the war, ready to side with the victors, and Lawrence admitted that he was an intriguer with an unerring instinct to further his own ends, that he was dishonest, cruel, a liar, and a miser. But he maintained that, while these faults were common to Asiatic rulers, Gulab Singh had virtues of exceeding rarity, that he was able and brave, and his morals were vastly superior to those of the common run of Indian rajas, that on occasion he could be "mild, conciliatory, and even merciful," and that his character was one capable of

being moulded. If Kashmir must be sold, let it be to a *man*, not to a vicious weakling, and of all the possibles Gulab Singh was the least objectionable.

Ruffian as the Maharaja of Kashmir undoubtedly was, his admiration and respect for Henry Lawrence were genuine and an influence for good. He was niggardly and yet he offered one hundred thousand rupees to the Lawrence Asylum when the work was started, and though Lawrence declined the offer at first, he finally asked the Government's sanction and accepted the gift. And when his patron left the Punjab, Gulab Singh sent twenty-five thousand rupees to the asylum, instead of subscribing to the testimonial, rightly judging that so unselfish a man would prefer this method of expressing regret.

Gulab Singh's offer of a million sterling was accepted, and when, in March 1846, the Lahore Treaty was signed by Mr. Currie and Major Lawrence on the part of England, and by the boy-maharaja, Dhulip Singh, and his minister, Lal Singh, on the part of the Sikhs, Gulab Singh was invested Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, the Dogra readily promising to abstain from further interference in the affairs of the Punjab. A British force was retained at Lahore, and Henry Lawrence ruled the land in the name of Dhulip Singh, and put forth his full powers in the attempt to establish a strong and friendly native rule.

CHAPTER XIII

(1846-1847)

THE LAWRENCES AND THEIR PUNJABIS

Henry becomes the " Ruling Spirit of the Punjab "—His " Disciples "—The Lahore Residency—John administers the Jalandar Doab—Female Infanticide—John's Subordinates—Sikh Intrigues—Banishment of the Maharani.

A HARDER task than that now given to Henry Lawrence would be difficult to conceive. Since the death of Ranjit Singh the twenty millions of Punjabis had had no master, and anarchy had prevailed from the Sutlej to the Indus. " Woe to that land that's governed by a child."

" No man," said the historian of the Sepoy War, " ever undertook a high and important trust with a more solemn sense of his responsibility, or ever, with more singleness of purpose and more steadfast sincerity of heart, set himself to work, with God's blessing, to turn a great opportunity to great account for the benefit of his fellows. In Henry Lawrence a pure transparent nature, a simple manliness, and truthfulness of character were combined with high intellectual powers and personal energies which nothing could easily subdue."

He now began to gather round him the nucleus of the famous Punjabi brotherhood. He was so good a judge of character, he knew so well how to make the best of men, that all his assistants made their mark in history. When in Nepal he had been greatly interested in the *Brahmini Bull* articles in the *Delhi Gazette*. Written by a junior

subaltern, they were declared by good authorities to be from the pen of a soldier of long service and varied experience in the field. Henry Lawrence was convinced that, in addition to ability, the author had the right spirit, and Herbert Edwardes became his private secretary. He remembered¹ the boy-hero of Ghazni, and before long John Nicholson was on the frontier; and one by one the others took their places by his side, his brothers George and John, Lieutenants Becher, Lake, Lumsden, and Reynell Taylor, and Captain Abbott²—"Uncle" Abbott whom Lawrence termed "a true knight-errant, gentle as a girl in thought and word and deed," who subdued by kindness the wild hillmen of Hazara whom the Sikhs had never been able to control.

He took their measure and sent them forth, one as ruler over five cities, another over ten, and his instructions were: "Settle the country; make the people happy; and take care there are no rows;" and, having tested them, he gave them responsibility. They were not hampered by red tape; he knew that his men were good, and that responsibility would therefore call forth their highest efforts. His disciples learned to stand alone, fearing no responsibility, acting on their own initiative and adapting themselves to diverse conditions. There were

¹ "Indeed, it was a well-known custom of Henry Lawrence to keep notes of the names of promising men. When at messes or assemblies, where the merits of officers were discussed, he would take out his note-book and forthwith make entries of men described by their comrades as good and true."—*Lumsden of the Guides*, pp. 19-20.

² Colonel Sir Robert Warburton has told how, in 1897, near Murri, "two very old men were walking ahead of me, and hearing the name of Abbott repeated time after time, curiosity induced me to join in their conversation. . . . To my inquiries they both said, 'Abbott Sahib was loved in the district, and the old people reverence his memory even now.' The elder of the Hazaras then spoke of his own accord: 'Abbott Sahib's heart was like a fakir's; he was always thinking of and for his people.'"—*Eighteen Years in the Khyber*, pp. 316-317.

too many Governors-General and Commanders-in-Chief in the Punjab, thought Lord Hardinge's successor; but when, at a later period, most Englishmen in India lost their heads for a time, the Punjabis were found cool and resourceful. Hodson, the cavalry leader, has given some idea of the duties that might fall to the lot of a mere ensign under Henry Lawrence.¹ "I am daily and all day at work with compasses and chain, pen and pencil, following streams, diving into valleys, burrowing into hills, to complete my work. I need hardly remark that having never attempted anything of the kind, it is bothering at first. I should not be surprised any day to be told to build a ship, compose a code of laws, or hold assizes."

"It was a wonderfully real and happy life in those early days of the Old Residency at Lahore," wrote Lady Edwardes.² "Here was a band of strong and young and earnest men, all bent on doing good, with their minds clear and strong, and full of hope, and at their head was Henry Lawrence, a giant in the battle of life, fighting against evil and wrong, and guiding all, and quickening into life and usefulness all bright thoughts and schemes that came to any of that earnest band of friends.

"And among them a few, fair, gentle women, wives and sisters—very few. But the ministering angel of them all was Honoria Lawrence, the brave and noble wife of Henry Lawrence, who was ever the inspiring genius of her husband's higher life, the glad sharer of his every thought, and the softening and refining element that glided through and pervaded that 'Old Residency,' and gave a charm to the wildness and roughness of this frontier life to all its inmates. For hers was a mind that loved the wildness, and rejoiced in the unconventionality of the life; and her room was the natural rallying-point of all the wit and

¹ *A Leader of Light Horse*, p. 24.

² *Memorials of Sir Herbert Edwardes*.

talent that was among them—and there was no lack of that.”

“ Henry Lawrence had suddenly become the ruling spirit of the Punjab,” said Abbott after his hero’s death, “ but he remained for his friends the same simple-minded, hearty Pat Lawrence of former years.”

It was the chance for which Henry Lawrence had lived, and he set to work to re-organise his vast kingdom, and tried hard to impress the influential sirdars with a sense of responsibility and duty towards the state and towards the common people, and, disheartening as was the apparent failure, he never slackened his efforts to persuade them to subordinate their own interests and ambitions to the service of the fatherland. Most delicate of all his dealings were those that had to do with the reputed queen-mother, one of those clever and unscrupulous Hindu women, who have wrought such harm in native states. One eye had, moreover, to be kept on his friend Gulab Singh at Jammu, whose aim was to keep the English too busy at Lahore to be able to pay much heed to his doings.

“ Henry Lawrence, indeed, was wholly without guile,” wrote Sir John Kaye.¹ What chance then could his open nature and straight dealing have when pitted against those past-masters in the art of intrigue, the maharani and Lal Singh, her lover and confidential minister! They, who tried to thwart him, soon found out.

“ In India,” said Sir John Kaye,² “ . . . our greatest successes have been achieved by men incapable of deceit, and by means which have invited scrutiny. When we have opposed craft to craft, and have sought to out-juggle our opponents, the end has been commonly disastrous. It is only by consummate honesty and transparent truthfulness that the Tallyrands of the East have been beaten by such mere children in the world’s ways

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 9.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 8.

as Mountstuart Elphinstone, Charles Metcalfe, James Outram, and Henry Lawrence."

Twenty-six years had passed since John Lawrence, a boy of eight, had followed his brother, "a bony muscular fellow" of fourteen, to watch him fight the bully of the school. "Who is to be your second?" John had asked. "You, if you like," Henry had replied. And now, in the year 1846, John was again to be his brother's second. While Henry was to be chief ruler, John was to govern a province.

The Governor-General of India had faith in the Lawrence brothers, so much so that some alleged that he was under Henry's thumb. A ruler was wanted for the Jalandar Doab, and once more Lord Hardinge bethought himself of the magistrate of Delhi. So he wrote to Mr. Thomason, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, asking him to send up John Lawrence. The great administrator took upon himself to send another officer—one whose capability he guaranteed. Not that Mr. Thomason had doubts with respect to Lawrence's fitness for the post; his disobedience was indeed a tribute, for he did not relish the idea of losing him. The capable officer was promptly sent back.

"*Send me John Lawrence!*" came the order, curt and not to be misconstrued, and, at the age of thirty-four, John Lawrence was promoted over the heads of his seniors to govern the newly-annexed Doab and the Hill States taken from the Sikhs.

The Jalandar Doab is the north-eastern tract of the Punjab, between the Beas and Sutlej rivers, a country fertile and well peopled. For some weeks he was practically single-handed, none of his four assistants having been able straightway to quit his post. Therefore we learn without any amazement that he looked back upon this time as one of the busiest of his hard-worked life.

One of his earliest reforms was the substitution of a money payment of the land-tax in place of the time-honoured payment in kind. Taxation was thereby reduced by 10 or even 20 per cent., but the natives were not easily convinced of the advantage, and the change was opposed until they saw that nothing would be gained by grumbling. Though "East is East and West is West," the Englishman is akin to the Jat.

He next resolved to check the murder of female infants, a practice all too common in his district. The difficulty in dealing with this class of crime was greater than would appear at first sight. An epidemic of murder and outrage of the commonplace type could be much more easily stamped out, even by an alien ruler if strong and backed by force. In such a case the criminals would get little sympathy from the better-disposed of their countrymen, by whom indeed the success of him who stood for good government would be welcomed. The suppressor of crime could have no pity for the murderers, or, at least, sympathy for the misguided men would never cause him to hesitate in the execution of his duty, nor could the sufferer pose as a martyr in a people's cause. But among high-caste Hindus female infanticide could not be classed as a crime in the ordinary sense. The custom was due, not to a vicious and callous nature, but to that caste-pride to which so many of India's woes must be ascribed. A Rajput dare not bestow his daughter upon an inferior in caste, nor upon a member of the same clan or tribe, and the chances of marriage are thus restricted. Even where there might be little difficulty in finding a husband the expense to which a Rajput is put by the celebration of a daughter's nuptials is often ruinous. As an unmarried girl is supposed to bring dishonour upon her father's house—the mother being her most bitter upbraider—Rajput parents consider that the death of the infant is the sure precaution against

disgrace or ruin for themselves, or a life of misery for the daughter.

To a Hindu the custom appears natural and praiseworthy, and though *Larens Sahib* was a just and wise *Hakim*, who evidently wished them well, in this matter he was clearly ignorant and irrational. So the commissioner could not look for help even from the most friendly of his subjects, unable as they were to appreciate his point of view, and the greybeards argued that in this matter they must surely know better than the young sahib from a far-off country where unclean and unspeakable customs prevail. On his part, John Lawrence could not place on a level with the *budmash*, who had cut a throat for gain, the manly Rajput who had sacrificed his daughter for what he considered the good of his family and of the victim herself. He did not, however, sit down to meditate upon the injustice of punishing a parent who, with none but the best of intentions and without suggestion of sin, had allowed his child to die. It was for him to check the practice, and that by force, and a few must suffer for the state. Persuasion would be useless; argument in vain. How could he reason with them, he looking at the obverse side of the shield, they at the reverse?

A petition, imploring him to refrain from interference with the workings of their conscience, was presented by the Bedis (a Levitical caste of the Sikhs). John Lawrence summoned their elders and ordered the chief priest and head of the clan to issue a proclamation forbidding the Bedis to slay their children. The old man replied that all he possessed was at the disposal of the sahib, but comply he could not. "Obey, or give up your lands," was the commissioner's alternative, and the chief of the Bedis chose the latter course, although it is the duty of the Bedis publicly to read and expound the *Granth* (the Sikh Bible), which not only forbids female infanticide but even com-

mands true Sikhs to abstain from all intercourse with those who kill their daughters.

In later days the grim but humour-loving viceroy, in a household blessed by numerous daughters, was heard to chuckle, "Ah! those Bedis were not such bad fellows after all; the only thing that I am disposed to regret in my Indian administration is that I was so hard upon them in the matter of female infanticide."¹

Among his assistants at this time were Robert Cust, Hercules Scott, Edward Lake of the Bengal Engineers, and Harry Lumsden, the first commandant of the Guides. They have placed on record their opinions of their chief, his abundant energy, his readiness to help the juniors however busy he might be, his ability to get work out of others, and his contempt for "drones and shirks." Though a hard taskmaster he was always most hard upon himself, and if he blamed freely he was not chary of praise. With this difference—and here we catch a glimpse of the man—he preferred to blame a man to his face and praise him behind his back. Henry dealt out praise and blame alike in the presence of whosoever deserved the one or the other, and, despite his fiery and touchy temperament, he was loved with a devotion rarely accorded to any great man in the history of the world.

John appreciated the good work of his more capable assistants even if he did not tell them as much. Here, however, in a note to his brother and chief, is an example of his scorn for inferior work. "I had to send all ——'s reports back, they are so badly done. He is a *rara avis* and says his work is killing him. A very innocent murder it would be!"²

"I held him in great awe at first," said Mr. Hercules Scott, "a feeling which was intensified by his strict oversight of all the proceedings of his subordinates, and

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 180.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 180.

by a certain ruggedness of manner and exterior, under which, as I afterwards found, the warmest and kindest of hearts lay concealed. My work must have bristled with irregularities and blunders, which were duly cauterised, but he made allowance for the unequal combat which, as a young hand, I had endeavoured to maintain, and reported very kindly of me to Government. . . . The awe with which he had inspired me soon wore off, and our acquaintance ripened into a thorough confidence and attachment. Pressing as were his own engagements, it was never the wrong time to apply to him for advice or guidance in carrying out one's duties."¹

Mr. Cust has described his master's interviews with the native land-holders when arranging terms for the new cash settlement. ² "John Lawrence was full of energy—his coat off, his sleeves turned up above his elbows—and was impressing upon his subjects his principles of a just state demand, and their first elementary ideas of natural equity; for, as each man touched the pen, the unlettered token of agreement to their leases, he made them repeat aloud the new trilogy of the English Government: 'Thou shalt not burn thy widow; thou shalt not kill thy daughters; thou shalt not bury alive thy lepers;' and old greybeards, in the families of some of whom there was not a single widow, or a female blood-relative, went away chanting the dogmas of the new Moses, which, next year, were sternly enforced."

Another assistant, Mr. Lewin Bowring, states that, "John Lawrence was very brusque of speech in those early days. . . . He used, with a merry twinkle of his eye, to say very sharp things to the Punjab chiefs, under which they winced, although he was half in fun. He certainly had what is called a rough tongue then, and the sirdars

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 172.

² *Pictures of Indian Life*, pp. 245-246.

had a wholesome dread of him. . . . He was a far abler man at details than his brother, though less considerate, perhaps, towards the Sikh chiefs. . . . The durbar, though they had a great respect for his force of character, did not regard him with as much affection as they did his brother.”¹ Mr. Bowring adds that, “in spite of his curt-ness of speech,” he was most popular with his assistants.

The spirit in which he buckled to his work in the Jalandar Doab is best expressed in a sentence from one of his letters to Sir Frederick Currie.² “It is a new country . . . and I want to put my stamp on it, that in after times people may look back and recall my Raj with satisfaction.”

He did put his stamp on it, and on India.

Though the peasants of the Trans-Sutlej Hill States were not sorry to be freed from Sikh oppression, the soldiers holding Kangra Fort refused to acknowledge the change of rulers. This famous rock fortress had the reputation of impregnability, and had been the object of innumerable sieges during its ten centuries of existence. The late maharaja had won it by stealth, and had left there a garrison of three hundred Sikhs, who now declared that they would hand the keys to Ranjit Singh if he should come for them, but to no lesser person. However worthy of admiration such steadfastness might be considered, defiance could not be tolerated; if allowed to pass, the example would assuredly be followed by other garrisons, and a loss of prestige would affect adversely the Lawrence influence for good. A further argument urged Henry to resort to strong measures. He had reason to believe that the maharani and Lal Singh were secretly encouraging the Kangra garrison to resist, whilst publicly denouncing them as traitors to Lahore. A success scored by the anti-

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 210-211.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 198.

British party in the durbar would be fatal to the good government of the Punjab.

The Resident set out from Lahore at the head of a Sikh force, and was joined by his brother and Lieutenant Lumsden with the local troops. Swiftmess was necessary. The Punjab was a powder-magazine, and a spark from Kangra might suffice to explode it. The foemen were not under-rated; there was no scornful move against Kangra with an inadequate and ill-equipped force, and a consequent delay until big guns and further supplies should arrive. The Lawrences demanded siege-guns and got them. The Sikhs on both sides, besieged and besiegers, laughed at the idea of heavy guns being brought along their goat-tracks. But the Commissioner of the Jalandar Doab invited the officers of the garrison to his camp and, when they persisted in their refusal to surrender, he asked them to stay the night and witness the arrival of the elephant guns. Convinced that he was bluffing them they agreed to remain. Early next morning they were aroused by the sound of cheers in time to see the guns arrive, each drawn by three elephants and helped round the sharp bends of the precipitous paths by scores of sepoys. Without a word the Sikh chieftains returned to their fort and the white flag presently signalled their submission. Not a drop of blood spilled, and a great result achieved.

The surrender of Kangra was a blow to the English-hating maharani, who soon cast about for fresh means to embarrass her supervisor and inflame the passions of the subjects of her son. She had not to look far. The entry of Gulab Singh into his kingdom of Kashmir supplied the pretext, and Lal Singh, the chief minister, and the Sheik Imam-ud-din, Governor of Kashmir, were her agents.

The Sikh durbar had ordered Imam-ud-din to hand over his charge to Gulab, but Lal Singh intimated privately that the command need not be taken seriously. Imam-

ud-din, "the best-dressed and best-mannered man in the Punjab," was debating whether to play entirely for his own hand and strike for the sovereignty of Kashmir, or to accept the maharani's bribe and oppose the entry of Gulab Singh on her behalf. He resolved in any case to fight the Dogra chief, and, doing so, he gained the advantage. This brought Henry Lawrence on the scene.

For the credit of the Sikh Government Gulab Singh must be promptly supported, and he ordered the durbar to furnish troops to quell the insurrection of their servant in Kashmir. They did their utmost to put him off, to make difficulties, to delay operations. Gulab Singh argued that the army should be sent by a certain route; Lal Singh objected and, with sublime effrontery, suggested that Gulab Singh, being no longer a member of the Lahore durbar, was courting disaster and disgrace for the Sikh troops by choosing the most perilous route. Gulab Singh was quite equal to strategy of this nature, but hardly when his own interests were bound up with the success of the undertaking.

The Sikh soldiers were unwilling to fight for any cause favoured by the English, and the eyes of their generals looked up to the hand of the maharani. But the feebler wills bent before the strong one; intrigue and cunning succumbed to resolution, and within a few weeks Henry had entered Kashmir at the head of a dozen Sikh regiments, mobilised by John, the civilian, and Imam-ud-din had surrendered to Herbert Edwardes.

This feat deserves to be studied. It may be passed over too lightly now that the employment of Sikh troops under British officers seems a proceeding most natural, for the Sikh warrior of that day had enjoyed many privileges as a member of the Khalsa brotherhood, including immunity from taxation and both the right and opportunity to harass the weak, and he was embittered by the loss of these.

It forms one of the most striking examples of moral force in the history of India, and the credit was shared by the brothers, for John was Acting-Resident when Imam-ud-din showed his hand, Henry being then at Simla. The sheik commanded a strong force and he held possession. The ten thousand Sikh troops, who went out against him, wished him success, as did their officers and the sirdars at Lahore. Officers and sepoy had recently been fighting against the British and they hated the Feringhis, and instead of being cowed by defeat they were "spoiling" for another fight. There were innumerable Oriental excuses for delaying operations, yet so great was the force of character and the *ikbal* (prestige) of Henry Lawrence—absolutely at the mercy of the fierce Khalsa soldiery—that everything happened as he had planned.

He himself described the affair as "a ticklish occasion," and divulged the fact that he had sent private word to Lal Singh, warning that Hindu Rizzio that, should any mishap befall the Resident, *Jan Larens* had orders to clap him into prison. Lal Singh knew his men. He had sought to dazzle the Englishmen by lavish displays of hospitality, and, seeing how completely he had failed, he cursed these pestilent Lawrence brothers, each of whom seemed in turn more wide-awake than the other. But it was checkmate.

So Gulab Singh became a king and swore to his patron that he would discourage infanticide and suttee. Imam-ud-din turned "king's evidence" and brought forth the secret instructions in which Lal Singh and the maharani had commanded him to resist. Lal Singh fell from his high estate and there was no eruption in Lahore, not a brick thrown, not a shop closed.

Lal Singh was tried and condemned by his colleagues of the Lahore durbar, the two Lawrences and three other British officers being present. Another question of im-

portance was discussed by the Council, namely, the near approach of the date fixed for the withdrawal of British troops. The disciples of Govind hated the foreigner and his unclean ways. The *Singh* is proud and somewhat sullen; he does not make friends easily as does that genial and faithful barbarian "Johnny Gurkha," and as does also Mohammed Khan, the Pathan—who may even cherish a fondness for the man he is plotting to murder for the sake of his rifle. But, like or dislike, the sirdars were sage enough to see that the only chance for the state lay in the presence of a British force and that anarchy would follow a withdrawal. Moreover, some of these Lahore councillors did feel real respect and esteem for Henry Lawrence, and they all trusted him. The full durbar of fifty-one Sikh chiefs unanimously asked that the Indian troops might be allowed to remain, and agreed to pay all expenses, and in accordance with their desire Colonel¹ Lawrence became Protector, and practically Despot, of the Punjab. In the wording of the treaty, "these terms give the British Resident unlimited authority in all matters of internal administration and external relation during the Maharaja's minority."

There was now "a triumvirate of Lawrences" in the Punjab, Lord Hardinge having given Major George Lawrence the charge of the Peshawar frontier, a post under Henry. Being a true Lawrence the elder brother was not envious. "It was very gratifying to me,"² he wrote to Henry's wife in England, "to see the high estimation in which he is evidently held by the chiefs, and, indeed, by all parties. I have never yet heard one dissenting voice as to his being the very man for his present berth . . . and could not have believed that one short year would have done so much. The officers freely admit that it was

¹ Promoted in June 1846.

² *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 91.

entirely due to Henry's energy and promptitude in repairing in person to Cashmere that matters there were brought to an amicable adjustment."

Lal Singh had been put out of harm's way, but they were not yet rid of the maharani. In spite of the anxiety caused by her intrigues Colonel Lawrence was able to write to Sir Frederick Currie, the Secretary to Government, in June 1847, that, "With the experience of fourteen months, I can certify to this people having settled down in a manner that could never have been hoped of them." At the same time he sounded a warning note against over-confidence. The Sikhs had lost neither their pride of race nor their fanaticism, and were by no means convinced of the hopelessness of a further trial of strength.

John had already borne testimony to the substantial progress made in a letter from Lahore to his brother.¹ "I don't think I ever knew the sepoy [Sikh] so well-behaved. . . . The opinion of us as rulers is greatly changed. The only evil is that when we get a country things go smoothly,² for the people see the benefit of the change, and are satisfied. But as they die off, or forget the olden days of trouble and misrule, they feel slight twitches from our shoe pinching, and get discontented."

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 189.

² The confidence of the natives of the Punjab in the English standard of honour may be illustrated by a story from Sir W. Lee Warner's *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie* (vol. i. p. 353). Fateh Khan Towana, a Mohammedan chieftain, expressed to John Lawrence his surprise that so much fuss should be made over such a man as Lal Singh. "'If you want him out of the way,' said he, 'I know a much shorter plan. Just say the word and' (half-drawing his dagger) 'I'll manage it all for you.' Lawrence shook his head and the conversation continued. Presently Lawrence put out his hand and drew Fateh Khan's dagger slowly out of its sheath. The chief took no notice, but went on talking. Lawrence then said to him, 'How is it that you who are so suspicious of anybody, allow me to extract your dagger from your belt without taking any notice of it?' 'Oh,' he replied, 'I know quite well that that is not the way the English fight. I would not have let a Sikh or any one else do it as quietly.'"

In another letter John, now Acting-Resident, introduces an actor upon whose performances all eyes were shortly to be concentrated. He was Mulraj,¹ Governor of Multan, the south-west province of the Punjab, a man who had been hand-in-glove with the queen-mother, and who had made the mistake of offering John Lawrence a bribe.² "I told him that Sahibs never took bribes or presents. This appeared to surprise him; and he asked me rather pointedly if none of us did so. I said, 'Not one in a hundred, and that one is not worth bribing; for, depend on it, he has neither influence nor character.' He seemed puzzled a good deal, and told me that he had hitherto had little to do with us, and that for the future he was our fast friend, and ready to do our bidding."

Possibly Mulraj meant it at the time—and he certainly gave us the Punjab.

Junda Khore, the maharani, was a daughter of a trooper in the service of Ranjit Singh. As a dancing girl she had captivated the conqueror, but there is little ground for the belief that Ranjit Singh was the father of Dhulip Singh, and it is even doubtful if she was his mother. By unscrupulous cunning she had made her recognition as queen-mother a necessity to the leading Sikh sirdars, and the boy was necessary to the furtherance of her intrigues.

¹ It is a curious fact that the folk who played the most prominent rôles upon the Sikh stage at this period were rarely Sikhs, who are too slow of wit to match the Brahmans or Mussulmans in intrigue. The maharani was a Hindu nautch-girl, Lal Singh and his successor Tej Singh were Brahmans, Mulraj was a Khatri, Gulab Singh a Dogra, and Imam-ud-din a Mussulman. After the death of Ranjit Singh the inability of the durbar to control the turbulent Khalsa was quickly made plain. The maharani and many of the sirdars saw that they were in danger of being crushed by it; and it is practically certain that they deliberately incited the army to invade British territory—knowing what the end must be—in order to direct its attention away from their hoards.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 193.

With or without the support of Mulraj she would not desist from her attempts to fan the smouldering fires into flame, and when she incited her son grossly and publicly to insult Tej Singh (the sirdar who had stepped into the shoes of her fallen favourite), so grave an affront to the chief minister and to the whole Council could not be allowed to pass, and Henry Lawrence judged that the time for persuasion and conciliation had gone by. He banished the queen-mother, granting her a liberal pension, and issued "*A General Proclamation for the Information of the Chiefs of the Lahore Durbar, the Priests, Elders and People of the countries belonging to the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh.*"

After stating that the interest felt by the Governor-General in the welfare of the boy-king was that of a father, he proceeded to explain the need for a separation—because of the mother's increasing intrigues to thwart all efforts for the country's good; because "the maharajah is now a child and he will grow up in the way that he is trained, . . . his mother would instil into him her own bitter feelings of hostility to the Chiefs;" because "every seditious intriguer who was displeased with the present order of things looked up to the Queen-Mother as the head of the State." Lord Hardinge wrote that he "entirely approved of the judicious terms in which the proclamation was worded," and added that,¹ "If I have any difference of opinion with you, it consists in your liberality in attempting at too early a period to train the Sikh authorities to walk alone; I wish them to feel and to like our direct interference by the benefits conferred."

The maharani was eventually conveyed to Benares, whence she escaped into Nepal, and after remaining there some years, finally made her way to her son's castle in England, where she died. Mr. Batten (John Lawrence's college chum) has told a good story with regard to the

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 101.

mischievous she might have wrought during the Mutiny had she been permitted to enter the Punjab. Mr. Batten had become acquainted, as Commissioner of Kumaon, with Jung Bahadur, Henry Lawrence's Gurkha friend. During a conversation soon after the capture of Lucknow (for which feat of arms the Gurkha took chief credit, whilst recognising that Sir Colin Campbell was entitled to a share) Jung Bahadur observed: "'You see I remained straight and true, and that was useful to your government in very bad times.' I said, 'Suppose you had not remained loyal what would you have done?' 'Why,' said he, 'I would have let down the Maharani of Lahore on *Jan Larens*, and then what would England have done?' I told this to Sir John Lawrence at Simla in 1864, and he said that Jung overrated his power, but that the Maharani would have been an 'awfully troublesome customer' in the Punjab."¹

That the Prime Minister of Nepal should consider, and that John Lawrence should acknowledge as possible, that this woman's influence among the Sikhs, even after an absence of ten years, might have brought about a different ending to the Sepoy War, proves how great was the triumph of Henry Lawrence in removing her baneful influence without outcry or excitement.

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 237.

CHAPTER XIV

(1847-1848)

THE SECOND SIKH WAR

Henry's Liberality—Benefits of His Rule—His Health breaks down, and John officiates for Him—Henry returns to England—The Multan Revolt—Fatal Delay—Herbert Edwardes—The Punjab Ablaze.

TURN aside for a space from affairs of state to glance at interests of a more directly personal nature. Henry Lawrence, whose enfeebled frame could but ill support the heat of Lahore, was compelled to pay occasional visits to the life-giving hills, and his place at Lahore was then taken by John. In August 1846 he set out with Lieutenant Hodson to find the most suitable site for his asylum, and they pitched upon the hill of Sanawar, among the Himalayan pines and deodars. Hodson, who was greatly devoted to him, undertook the secretarial duties connected with the asylum, and carried them through with the energy and skill for which even the severest of his critics gave him credit.

Interest in the welfare of his pet project did not, however, leave Henry Lawrence cold towards other charities. For several years—since his increase of salary on appointment to Nepal—he had put aside £400 a year for distribution by his friend Mr. Marshman to worthy institutions in the Calcutta district.¹ The Lawrences

¹ These included:—Dr. McGowan's Hospital, the Fever Hospital, the Serampore Native Hospital, the European Female Orphan Society, the Sailors' Home, the District Charitable Society, the Benevolent Institution, the Free Church, Calcutta, the Church

were members of the Church of England, but wherever they happened to have influence it was exercised on behalf of missionaries, without regard to sect or race. "Differences about bishops look very small under the shadow of an idol with twelve heads," wrote Sir Herbert Edwardes.

When Henry and John were together in Lahore they appear to have lived under conditions that would have incurred condemnation by a housing commission. Henry, the Patriarch, shared a room with the already-distinguished engineer who afterwards became Lord Napier of Magdala; John, his wife, three children, and their European servant, had two rooms; some of the assistants were as well off as their chief, and others must needs be content with a third of a room—and this was in the plains. The candle lighting the room or tent in which they were working was frequently stuck in the neck of a bottle, and when additional illumination was needed Henry observed that some one must first drink a bottle of beer. They were then governing twenty millions of people and handling a revenue of some hundreds of lacs per annum. John would work with his "shirtsleeves turned over his arms and a cigar in his mouth," and Henry was even less regardful of the conventionalities. These were the happy days of Henry Lawrence.

More had been accomplished during his supremacy at Lahore than could have been hoped for by the most sanguine student of Anglo-Indian affairs, and he paid the penalty in loss of health. A short stay at Simla failed to set him up, and towards the close of the year 1847 he returned to England, in the company of his warm friend

Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, the Baptist Missionary Society, the Serampore Missionary Society, the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society, the Bible Association, the Calcutta Diocesan Clergy Society.—*Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 46-47.

and admirer, Lord Hardinge, whose term of office had expired.

The services he had rendered to the people of the Punjab included the introduction of a simplified penal code suited to the needs of the country. He had also convened a council of fifty lambardars and zaildars (heads of villages and of groups of villages) for the purpose of reducing "the unwritten customs and morals of the people to a written law." One of his greatest difficulties had been due to the complications involved in dealing with, and granting redress for, outrages and robberies committed before the Company had stepped in. It was not easy to get at the rights of a case of alleged murder or confiscation of property that had taken place some years before, a case arising from some dispute whose beginnings might perhaps be traced back to the time when Porus reigned over the Land of the Five Rivers. After much thought the Resident ruled that cognisance should be taken of, and redress given for, acts committed during the previous three years.

The Khalsa army had been reduced by more than 60,000 men, whose arrears had been paid up, much to their astonishment, and the discharged warriors were, moreover, offered inducements to settle down to civil life. Those for whom peace had no attractions soon discovered that they would not be allowed to roam and raid at will in free companies and robber bands.

The antagonism of view—not of aim—between the brothers had peeped forth once or twice during these eighteen months. Henry being absent, and John in temporary charge at Lahore, a deputation of the sirdars approached the latter with a prayer that they might be excused from fulfilling their promise to pay the expenses of the British troops on whose presence they were dependent. They would willingly pay, but the state coffers were empty,

and Lord Hardinge, being their "real father," surely would not exact tribute from his children.

John Lawrence waived the ingenuous plea aside. There would be plenty of money, said he, if only the Sikh officials would deal honestly with the state. To place the kingdom upon a sounder financial basis he suggested that tax-gatherers should be responsible to the Resident, not to the Lahore Government, and that no money should be spent without his signature.

This proposal did not commend itself to Henry, who had not lost all hope of training the sirdars to perform their duties conscientiously, nor of making them worthy of responsibility. He would rather that the state finances should be unsatisfactory if only the people were gaining in character, honesty, and a sense of duty to their fellows, than that the revenue should be large and the nation remain unfit to stand alone. A gain in moral strength would outweigh a loss of any number of lacs to the revenue. Henry regarded the problem from the military and political standpoint; John from the financial. The latter understood better "the importance of a clear balance-sheet," and warned his brother that annexation would be inevitable unless the Punjab could pay its way.

Their differences were fundamental. Henry had a larger gift of sympathy; John was better able to rule on scientific principles. Henry acknowledged his brother as master in the regions of finance, and John paid ungrudging tribute to Henry's finer genius. Here, in a letter to Sir John Kaye, is the elder brother's opinion of the younger's aptitude for work. He refers to the days of 1846 and 1847 when he was Regent and John his right hand man. ¹"Each of my assistants was a good man. The most were excellent officers. My chief help, however, was my brother John, without whom I must have had

¹ *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. ii. p. 298.

difficulty in carrying on. . . . He gave me always such help as only a brother could." But in his zeal to save the country from bankruptcy John Lawrence forgot at times that the Punjab was not a "district" of British India, and that the Resident, for whom he was acting, was after all the "friendly adviser" of the maharaja's council. The sirdars soon perceived that he was no friend of their order; they compared him unfavourably with his brother, and found his yoke too heavy.

Though well aware that John would take a line divergent from his own, if freed from his control, Henry was convinced that his younger brother was the statesman best fitted to rule the Punjab, in his absence, for the benefit of the natives. Before leaving India he recommended that John should continue as Acting-Resident, but Lord Hardinge, albeit one who believed in the Commissioner of the Jalandar Doab, evidently considered that so important a post should be conferred upon one senior in service; or, perhaps, he was afraid, not of being thought, but actually of being, too much under Henry Lawrence's influence, and Sir Frederick Currie was appointed Resident at Lahore. The appointment was in some respects unfortunate. Sir Frederick was a distinguished civil servant, but his knowledge of the Sikhs had not been acquired on the spot. He well deserved to be had in honour, but he had no desire that promotion should take this form, and there is reason to believe that he only accepted because he was under the delusion that his temporary holding of the office would oblige the Lawrences. As he could not take up the reins at once John was left in charge at Lahore until the middle of March. On April 3, 1848, three weeks after Currie's arrival, John returned to Jalandar.

On the homeward voyage Lord Hardinge penned a strong recommendation that Colonel Henry Lawrence's exceptional services should be marked in a manner befitting

the occasion. Within a month of his arrival in England Lawrence was made a K.C.B., and that which Mr. Huddleston had foretold to Letitia had come to pass. He had been parted from wife and children for little more than two years, a short enough period judged by the Anglo-Indian standard of that day, but this was the first time they had been in England together since the discovery that they were all in all to one another, and there were the scenes of old years to revisit, distant memories and associations to recall.

And while they were planning what to do with the unaccustomed holiday, India had already begun to regret his absence, to realise that as yet no man was able to fill his place in the Punjab. Mulraj of Multan had shot his bolt; the south-western province had risen against the British. The sparks from Multan were blown northward; the combustible material burst into flame, and on all sides rose up fanatics to pour oil on the fire, calling upon their followers to "strike for God and the Guru." The military instincts of the hardy peasantry were aroused; they remembered their former prowess and the days of Ranjit Singh; they beat their ploughshares into swords, left the fields to the women, and hurried to the fray.

Sir Henry Lawrence had not fondly imagined that the Punjab was reconciled to British rule. "If every Sikh and Sirdar in the Punjab," he had declared to Lord Hardinge, "were to avow himself satisfied . . . it would be the extreme of infatuation to believe him."¹ He did not hesitate now; his place was in the Punjab; there could be no rest for body or mind while his own province was calling unto him. Each post brought worse news; the revolt was spreading and the Government of India was doing nothing to check it. There was one gleam of light, one patch of blue, through the lowering clouds. Away on

¹ Kaye's *Sepoy War*, vol. i. pp. 13-14.

the far side of Multan, cut off from all succour, his friend and pupil, Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes, was upholding England's honour, defeating and shutting up the army of Mulraj with a handful of raw Sikh and Mussulman levies. And his own chosen lieutenants—John Lawrence in the Jalandar Doab, George at Peshawar (where he was soon to endure a second captivity), Nicholson, Abbott, Reynell Taylor, Cocks, and others of his own men—were holding their own in their isolated posts, separated one from the other by hundreds of miles, while the great Indian army lay inactive. How bitter must have been the thought that his work was undone. The news was a shock, but a stimulant no less. He wrote at once offering to return to duty.

The big province of Multan had been governed despotically by Mulraj, who had succeeded his father, Sawan Mull, the best and most popular of Ranjit Singh's viceroys. Had the British regency not been appointed in the Punjab, Mulraj would no doubt have taken advantage of the prevailing anarchy to carve out for himself an independent sovereignty. He had been paying a tribute of twenty-one lacs of rupees to Lahore—and probably squeezing double that amount out of his people—and he now declined to account for the revenue of his province. Therefore John Lawrence had granted him safe conduct to Lahore and had attempted to reason with him. In a fit of temper Mulraj had resigned his governorship and, much to his surprise, had been taken at his word. The Acting-Resident—his brother warmly approving—had thereupon appointed Mr. Arthur Cocks to Multan, to assess the province afresh, but as Henry was on the point of departure for England, the Governor-General had ordered the appointment to be left over until Sir Frederick Currie could take charge.

Cocks was an able officer who knew the country and

could handle Punjabis, and the Lawrences wished him to be there before the hot weather. But red-tape had prevailed; Cocks had been otherwise employed, and when Currie took up his duties at Lahore he sent Lieutenant Anderson and Mr. Vans Agnew to Multan in charge of the new governor. As they passed through the fort gates the two Englishmen were struck down, and the greater part of their escort promptly deserted and cast in its lot with the assassins. A few sepoys bravely defended the wounded officers, but in vain, and both were murdered. Though there is no proof that the crime had been premeditated by Mulraj, he determined to profit by it, and issued a proclamation calling upon the Punjab to cast off the English yoke.

From the Doab John Lawrence urged the Government to despatch a force to Multan without a day's unnecessary delay, and so prevent the spread of the revolt. The hot season had begun, and Multan has an evil reputation for heat, but, conceding the perils of the climate, he pressed the conviction that delay was still more dangerous.

When Imam-ud-din had raised his standard in Kashmir Henry Lawrence had delivered his knock-down blow at once, and won, and saved much bloodshed. Had he shown hesitation his Sikh troops would have gone over to the rebel. He did not, and his force of character and promptness to act averted a costly campaign. Had he now been in the Punjab to support his brother's views, no doubt his prestige among the Sikhs and his influence with the Council would have prevailed, and a few weeks might have seen the collapse of the rising. "Had Lawrence been at our head now," wrote Lumsden, within a fortnight of the outbreak, "we should have been in Multan by this time."

But Sir Hugh Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, afraid of no man, recklessly brave, yet dreaded a campaign in the

hot season; and Lord Dalhousie, being new to India, for once bowed to the opinion of others. It was the only mistake of the kind that he made during his masterful and brilliant career as Governor-General. Sir Frederick Currie was in favour of immediate action, but his position was less strong than that of his predecessor, and he could not speak with equal authority; and John's insistent letters, pointing out what must ensue as soon as the Sikhs should realise that British officers might be murdered with impunity, were disregarded, or at least they failed of their effect. Instead of the needed flying column to deal with Mulraj, preparations were deliberately made for what Henry bitterly termed "a grand *shikar* [hunt] in the cold season under the lead of the Governor-General."

The whole attention of the Commissioner of the Jalandar Doab was presently required in his own district, where a number of hill chieftains followed the lead of Mulraj. He and his assistants organised a small flying column wherewith they conducted a fortnight's campaign in which hardly a shot was fired or a sword-cut given, though the Jalandar Doab and the hill-states were thereby secured against the horrors of war.

In each district through which he passed the chieftains and headmen were ordered to attend, and were given the choice of being ruled by the pen or by the sword. "They were assembled in scores, and, when a sword and a pen were placed before them to select the instrument by which they wished to be ruled, the pen was grasped with enthusiasm."¹ Promptness, coolness in emergencies, and the courage that does not shrink from responsibility, these were the qualities shown by the Commissioner and his subordinates.

¹ Robert Cust's *Pictures of Indian Life*, pp. 254-255. The statue of John Lawrence on the Mall in Lahore commemorates this incident. Holding in one hand the sword, in the other the pen, he asks the men of the Punjab: "By which will you be governed?"

Equally admirable were the efforts put forth by Henry's disciples to uphold British prestige. Very brilliant were the feats of Herbert Edwardes. Engaged in the Revenue Survey, in the far country between the Indus and the Sulaiman Hills, he heard by chance of the murders. With him was a small escort of Sikhs and Mussulmans, and with this ridiculous array he crossed the Indus and invited Mulraj to "come on," to use his own words "like a terrier barking at a tiger." Asking no official sanction he enrolled a number of Pathans—men who bore no love to Mulraj—and, giving battle to the Dewan, defeated him badly, and actually drove him in confusion back to the city walls. Once more Edwardes thrashed his opponent, and Mulraj was compelled to shut himself up in his fortress.

"Now is the time to strike," Edwardes wrote. "It is painful to see that I have got to the end of my tether." He urged the authorities to send "a few heavy guns, a mortar battery, a few sappers and miners, and Major Robert Napier" to finish the war. The sanguine Edwardes probably underestimated the strength of Multan, but who knows if he might not have succeeded? England would not be ruling India had her sons allowed themselves to be checked by the impossible.

Still no move was made. Operations were so long delayed that by the time General Whish was sent to Multan, the Punjab was ablaze and Dost Mohammed remembered the wrongs he had suffered at the hands of the English. For the first time Sikhs and Afghans were united, and Peshawar, the prize for which battles had been lost and won, was gracefully conceded to the Barakzai. George Lawrence was again a captive to the bow and spear of the Pathan.

"Unwarned by precedent, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation have called for war and on my word, sirs,

they shall have it with a vengeance." So spoke Lord Dalhousie as he took the field, and his words were true, and there was bitter lamentation in the Punjab. England had poured out blood and treasure to help her; her best men had toiled for the peace and prosperity of the Sikhs; but the fanaticism of the people and the ambition of intriguers had prevailed, and for a time it seemed that the British rather than the Sikhs were doomed "to have it with a vengeance." For the opening battles of Ramnuggur and Sadalpur went in favour of the aggressor.

Sir Henry Lawrence arrived before Multan in time to take part in the reduction of the town and to receive the surrender of Mulraj. Thence he hastened to join the main army, and he witnessed the carnage of Chillianwalla, a "victory" that spread consternation and horror throughout the empire. A cry arose for the supersession of brave old Gough, and Sir Charles Napier, the brilliant and erratic, was sent out from England as, in 1899, Lord Roberts received the nation's mandate to retrieve Buller's disasters. So great was the need that the Duke of Wellington declared that either Napier or he himself must go.

CHAPTER XV

(January-March 1849)

A NEW ERA IN INDIA

Henry's Policy overturned—Lord Dalhousie—Gujerat—Henry opposes, John urges, Annexation—The Governor-General agrees with John.

THE presence of Sir Henry Lawrence in the Punjab was heralded by Europeans and natives alike as a light in the darkness, an omen of British success, and Lord Dalhousie was not pleased. Punjabis and Europeans had freely stated that Mulraj would not have dared to raise the standard of revolt had Lawrence remained at Lahore. "The *Ikkal* [prestige] of the great English chief"—so said the natives—"had deserted his countrymen," and now shone forth this same *ikkal* to give strength to the loyal sirdars and to weaken the resistance of the disloyal. Lord Dalhousie, however, preferred that the Punjab should acknowledge British supremacy through the force of Britain's armed might, and he took an early opportunity to convince Sir Henry that the old order had given place to the new, and that the people of the Punjab must now regard their former Regent as no more than the servant and mouthpiece of the Governor-General.¹

Before leaving England Sir Henry had received a letter from Lord Dalhousie giving him warning of a change in policy, and informing him in the plainest terms that the

¹ "I have received the thanks of the Government," Lieutenant Lumsden wrote to his father in 1847, and, what I prize more, Lawrence's approbation."—*Lumsden of the Guides*, p. 34.

days of Sikh independence had gone by, though there had been "no more sincere friend of Lord Hardinge's policy to establish a strong Hindu government between the Sutlej and the Khyber than I." John agreed with the Governor-General, and after events have justified their wisdom. But it is not easy to give up an ideal. Sir Henry sailed for India, suspicious of India's new master and all his ways, and the dictatorial tone of subsequent communications was not calculated to conciliate. Lord Dalhousie was thirty-seven years of age, and a few months of his life had been spent in India; Henry Lawrence was forty-two, and for twenty-six years India's interests had been his. His knowledge of the country and the people was only equalled by their trust in him, and the previous Governor-General had constantly deferred to his opinion. How galling must it have been to his proud spirit to endure the rebukes and submit tamely to the dictates of the young "Laird of Cockpen!"

On the day of his arrival in the Punjab he received the first intimation that he was no longer supreme, and that all men were to understand that the once-powerful Resident was there simply to do the bidding of another. An impression prevailed—probably well founded—that Mulraj, having heard of his approach, wished to surrender to him in person. Straightway Lord Dalhousie wrote to anticipate the granting of unduly favourable terms. "I have to inform you," said he, "that I will grant no terms whatever to Mulraj, nor listen to any proposal but unconditional surrender. If he is captured he shall have what he does not deserve—a fair trial."

Sympathy in the disputes that arose will generally be found on the side of Henry Lawrence, the Christian warrior and statesman, so humble in his pride, who knew so well, and fought so bravely against, his hot temper and too great "touchiness," the two faults of a character otherwise

almost blameless. We call to mind his restless championship of the poor and weak, the despised and oppressed; how in poverty or comparative wealth he deemed his money a trust to be used for others. His influence over the strong men of the Punjab is remembered—how he was proudly acknowledged as master by perhaps the finest group of administrators ever set over a subject state, by men who were themselves held in awe, and even worshipped by the Punjabis; masterful men like John Nicholson who—refusing to bow the head to any other superior, even to John Lawrence or Lord Dalhousie—would humbly acquiesce in Henry's lightest wish; like Hodson of Hodson's Horse, who, arrogant and high-handed and too well aware of his own ability, yet did homage gladly to him whom he revered.

But we must not take for granted that, because his was the more lovable nature and his experience the greater, Henry Lawrence was in the right in all his disputes with the Governor-General. For many years his ambition had been to train the Punjab to take its place among the nations of the earth, acknowledging British suzerainty yet working out its own salvation, and he was loth to renounce the ideal. On the other hand Lord Dalhousie was convinced that there would be small prospect of peace for India until the Khalsa had been crushed and the Sikhs forced to acknowledge that the English were their masters. This lesson taught, their affairs must then be administered by Englishmen, and the natives treated as children unfit to govern themselves and ignorant of their own good. He was not necessarily in the wrong because he differed from his greatest subject.

What would have happened had Sir Henry been allowed a free hand no man can say. But this we know, that the Punjab, administered by the Lawrences in accordance with the theories of Lord Dalhousie, not only gained peace and

prosperity, but soon became the model province, and after eight years' experience as British subjects her sons saved India for the English. But could this have been achieved without the Lawrence influence?

Throughout his tenure of office Lord Dalhousie was actuated by a lofty sense of duty. His evident self-confidence was never conceit; it was justified by his splendid abilities and high character, and, after all, he it was who was responsible for the conduct of Indian affairs, and he meant to be ruler in fact as well as in name. He believed in himself, and, having discovered at this early date that evil had come from deference to the opinions of his advisers, he apparently renounced the practice for all time. He would have failed in his duty had he sanctioned measures which he—with exceptional mental grip—sincerely believed to be injurious to the country placed under his care. And Lord Dalhousie has never been accused of having shirked a duty, however unpleasant to himself or others.

Granting this we may still regret that he did not consider it worth while to tone down his expressions of opinion and speak with some show of deference to one who was his senior in years and experience, and his superior in greatness; who had served the state with such noteworthy self-sacrifice. It must be acknowledged that Sir Henry erred greatly in his disputes with the Governor-General by displaying an aptness to take offence regrettable in so good and great a man. He jumped to conclusions which were not warranted and was inclined to regard as slights, or even insults, words and phrases which—though they had been better expressed differently—were not meant to stab. His sensitive nature would not permit him to understand and make allowance for Lord Dalhousie's very different temperament.

From this time forward Henry Lawrence's career was to be one of disappointment. Happily for the Punjab

his work suffered from no diminution of energy and his devotion to the good of others continued as great as ever, albeit he lacked the joy in the work that had hitherto been his.

Lord Dalhousie was clever, earnest, upright, and devoted to his duty. And his conception of duty was not narrow. He had resolved to work with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength for the greatest good of the greatest number, and to attain this end he never spared himself. Here surely was a man after Henry Lawrence's own heart, and what could arise to prevent these two, so similar in character, so earnest in striving after the same ideals, from working harmoniously together?

Lord Dalhousie lacked sympathetic imagination, the gift that enables its possessor to see through the eyes of others, to calculate the effect of each new thing upon minds dissimilar to his own, differently prejudiced as the result of a very different environment. He had little patience with the native point of view, especially in the early days. His duty was to make India prosperous, and, "please God, I will obey." If the natives of India—more sharp-witted than the English peasant—have a method of reasoning differing from that of Europeans, then to reason with them would obviously be vain. Results must speak for themselves.

Henry Lawrence stood as firm as the Governor-General against any compromise between right and wrong, but he could see, and feel sympathy with, the Oriental point of view, and would never ride rough-shod over native prejudices even for the good of the natives themselves. Understanding their feelings he had a better chance of reasoning with them and of explaining the benefits to be expected from a proposed reform. But as Lord Dalhousie did not feel the want of imagination, nor ever know how greatly his good work in India suffered from its absence, he does

not seem to have approved of those qualities in his chief subordinate, and had probably determined what line to take with him before he had even seen him.

“ You say you are grieved at all you saw and heard at Lahore,” he wrote after Chillianwalla—and one could have wished for a different tone towards him who held the foremost place in men’s hearts in India—“ so was I—so I have long been ; but I don’t know whether our griefs are on the same tack.”

Before the decisive battle of Gujerat had ground the Khalsa into the dust, Sir Henry had, with the consent of the Governor-General, drafted a proclamation to the Sikh nation, pointing out the folly of resistance and the wisdom of laying down their arms. To this Sir Henry, who regarded the Sikhs as erring children rather than as deadly foes, added some expression of his personal interest in their welfare, and the addition was probably an appeal to the sirdars’ knowledge of and confidence in his friendship. Had he published the proclamation without first submitting the addition for approval one might understand the displeasure of such an autocrat as Lord Dalhousie. But he did not step outside the limits of his office, and the mere proposal to include the expression of personal feeling surely could not justify a rebuke so stinging.

FEROZEPORE, *February 1, 1849.*

In my conversation with you a few days ago I took occasion to say to you that my mode of conducting public business, in the administration with which I am entrusted, and especially with the confidential servants of the Government, are, to speak with perfect openness, without any reserve, and plainly to tell my mind without disguise or mincing of words. In pursuance of that system, I now remark on the proclamation you have proposed. It is objectionable in matter, because, from the terms in which it is worded, it is calculated to convey to those who are engaged in this shameful war an expectation of much more favourable terms, much more extended immunity from punishment, than I consider myself justified in granting them. It is objectionable in manner: because (unintentionally, no doubt) its whole tone substitutes you personally,

as the Resident at Lahore, for the Government which you represent. It is calculated to raise the inference that a new state of things is arising; that the fact of your arrival with a desire to bring peace to the Punjaub is likely to affect the warlike measures of the Government; and that you are come as a peacemaker for the Sikhs, as standing between them and the Government. This cannot be. . . . There must be entire identity between the Government and its agent, whoever he is. . . . I repeat, that I can allow nothing to be said or done, which should raise the notion that the policy of the Government of India, or its intentions, depend on your presence as Resident in the Punjaub. . . . I am very willing that a proclamation should be issued by you, but bearing evidence that it proceeds from Government. It may notify that no terms can be given, but unconditional submission; yet that, on submission being immediately made, no man's life shall be forfeited for the part he has taken in hostilities against the British Government.¹

Sir Henry replied as follows:—

LAHORE, *February 5.*

I have written the proclamation in the terms I understand your lordship to desire; but any alteration made in it, or the letter, by your order will be duly attended to when the translations are prepared. I may, however, observe, the Natives do not understand "unconditional surrender." They know that, with themselves, it implies murder and spoliation. As, therefore, life and security from imprisonment is promised to the soldiers, I would suggest that the words "unconditional surrender" be omitted, as they may be made use of by the ill-disposed to blind others to the real conditions. . . .

My own opinion, as already more than once expressed in writing to your lordship, is against annexation. I did think it unjust: I now think it impolitic. It is quite possible I may be prejudiced and blinded; but I have thought over the subject long and carefully. However, if I had not intended to have done my duty under all circumstances, conscience permitting, I should not have hurried out from England to have taken part in arrangements that, under any circumstances, could not but have in them more of bitterness than all else for me.

But how bitter the task would prove he had not yet realised. Lord Dalhousie's may have been the right policy, but why inflict unnecessary pain? The Governor-General's decision need have been no less decided had it been conveyed in more befitting terms. Sir Henry himself did

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 123-125.

not spare the rod even to the dearest of his friends. Without reference to his chief Major Herbert Edwardes had thought fit to disband a Pathan regiment which had behaved badly. But here the rebuke is from a senior in age and experience, from one whom Edwardes was proud to call his master, of whose love and esteem he was assured.

"Lieutenant Young has behaved admirably as a soldier; but where would be the end of men acting on their own responsibility if not only you, but he, could without reference to me, disarm and discharge a regular regiment for an offence committed months ago? If such is right, there is no need of a Resident at all. . . . Just now, when you are only recovering from a sick bed, I am sorry to have to find fault with you, but I have no alternative in this matter. The times have loosened discipline, but the sooner it is returned to, the better for all parties. . . . You will not mistake me. You know me to be your friend, I hope in the best sense. I know and admire your excellent qualities; I fully appreciate the good service you have done, and have most gladly borne testimony to them; but this is not the first time we have had a discussion of this kind: I most sincerely hope it will be the last."¹

Compare Lord Dalhousie's comment on this reprimand.

"I am greatly surprised with what you write to me about Major Edwardes, or rather, I should say I am greatly vexed, but not surprised at all. . . . But I further wish to repeat what I said before, that there are more than Major Edwardes in the Residency, who appear to consider themselves, nowadays, as Governor-General at least. The sooner you set about disenchanting their minds of this illusion the better for your comfort and their own. . . . For my part, I will not stand it in quieter times for half an hour, and will come down unmistakeably upon any one of them who may 'try it on,' from Major Edwardes, C.B.,

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 126.

down to the latest enlisted general-ensign-plenipotentiary in the establishment."

We are not permitted to entertain any doubt of Lord Dalhousie's ability to chastise his subordinates with words well-chosen and unambiguous. The autocrat, who seemed to take delight in lashing his officers to heel, might be respected but hardly loved. Certainly not until he himself had been tested and proved. While recognising equally the folly of any neglect to point out to an erring junior that he is exceeding his authority—even when the delinquent has just been rightly acclaimed as a hero—both Henry and John Lawrence understood men too well to hurt a good worker's pride for the sake of a stinging phrase. We shall see later how the younger brother dealt with Nicholson when that most wonderful man turned refractory.

Sir Henry Lawrence would derive little satisfaction from contemplation of the fact that the Governor-General was even less pleased with the performance of others. Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, was a distinguished soldier, one of the bravest of men and best loved of generals. Rash he probably was, but in considering the checks he encountered we must bear in mind that the Khalsa army was excellently armed and trained, and that in courage and prowess the Sikhs were far superior to the *poorbeah*¹ sepoy's opposed to them. Unlike his predecessor Lord Dalhousie was no soldier and he failed to appreciate the magnitude of the task. The following extracts from his letters to Sir Henry (quoted by Mr. Bosworth Smith) bear witness to his typical "cocksureness" and his proneness to censure.

"Everything in the camp as far as the Commander-in-Chief is concerned grows worse and worse. . . . I have written to him to-day on his future proceedings in terms which I am sure will be distasteful to him."

¹ "The man from the East," a term applied first to the Oudh sepoy's in the Bombay army, and, in later years, to all mutineers.

Again, in reply to Sir Henry's request that he might be allowed to join the field force in order to impart vigour and prudence to the counsels.

"It is already too notorious that neither you nor anybody else can exercise any wholesome influence on the mind of the Commander-in-Chief; if you could have done so, the action of Chillianwalla would never have been fought as it was fought. . . . Moreover, I have my orders. I am ordered, in the first instance, to conquer the country. Please God, I will obey.

"What 'thought' the Camp of the Commander-in-Chief has signifies very little. The camp's business is to find fighting; I find thought; and such thought as the camp has hitherto found is of such d—d bad quality, that it does not induce me to forego the exercise of my proper functions."¹

Before Sir Charles Napier could take over the command the old general had fought the battle of Gujerat. The heroic Sikhs were crushed and Lord Gough had retrieved his honour. A more complete victory against odds has seldom been won, and the result was due to the generalship of the victor, not to any lack of courage on the part of the vanquished. "Ranjit Singh is dead to-day," was the phrase—at once expressive and pathetic—used by the Sikh chiefs as they gave up their swords and watched their followers adding to the pile of surrendered arms.

The Punjab lay at the feet of the victors. Sir Henry admitted that the Sikhs had forfeited all right to the empire Ranjit Singh's genius had created, but he still

¹ A comment in Lord Dalhousie's diary shows, however, his appreciation of the qualities that had made Lord Gough the idol of the men he commanded. On receiving the news of the honours given to his subordinates for their services at Gujerat, the old general's delight was so manifest that Lord Dalhousie wrote: "I truly believe that his warm, generous old heart exults in the success of his officers quite as much as in his own Viscounty."—Lee Warner's *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie*, vol. i. p. 230.

cherished the hope that they might yet be taught to conduct their own affairs under English supervision. John, originally an opponent of annexation and no more ready to cry "*Vae Victis*" than his brother, was now satisfied that in British rule lay the only hope for the Punjab.

Lord Dalhousie invited Sir Henry to confer with him respecting the arrangements for converting the Punjab into a province of India. Henry was willing that John should go in his stead, influenced no doubt partly by what he considered as the lack of confidence shown by the Governor-General, and partly by the sentiment that his brother, in whom he had complete trust, was more in sympathy with his lordship's views, and would therefore do better than one whose heart was not in his work. So John Lawrence advised immediate annexation—urged it upon Lord Dalhousie, who, in truth, required no urging. He had already decided, and Sir Henry tendered his resignation, feeling that he did right to retire from the post he loved so well in favour of one who was in more complete accord with the Governor-General.

But Lord Dalhousie—who, after all, is one of the grandest figures in Anglo-Indian records—did not underrate the value of the Resident's services. He spoke his mind freely and was always more ready to blame than to praise, and, lacking imagination, he does not at this period seem to have been able to understand why his subordinate should object, when his outspokenness was so obviously for the good of the state.

"As for your not having my confidence," he had written two or three weeks earlier, "differences of opinion must not be understood as withdrawal of confidence. You give, and will, I hope, continue to give, me your views frankly. I shall give you, in reply, my opinions as frankly. If we differ, I shall say so; but my saying so ought not to be interpreted to mean want of confidence. Be assured, if

ever I lose confidence in your services, than which nothing is further from my contemplation, I will acquaint you of the fact promptly enough."

Most excellent advice! but Lord Dalhousie's defect did not permit him to regard the situation from the subordinate's standpoint. It is more easy for a superior to speak "frankly" than for a junior, and more satisfactory withal.

When Lord Dalhousie pointed out how, by remaining in office, he could soften the fall of the Sikhs and ensure the just and kindly treatment of the conquered people, Henry Lawrence was induced to withdraw his resignation.

On March 30, 1849, the Punjab was proclaimed a British province and the Punjab Board of Administration was formed, with Sir Henry as President and John Lawrence and Mr. Mansel the remaining members. The province was not to be governed by Regulations, but by despotism pure and simple—the form of government most conducive to progress when the right man is in the right place.

CHAPTER XVI

(1849-1851)

THE PUNJAB BOARD

A Rule of Three—Disarmament—The Frontier Force—The Guides—Thuggee and Dacoity stamped out—Public Works—The Province pays its Way—The “Punjab Head”—John’s Capacity for Work.

LORD DALHOUSIE’S Board of Administration was an experiment in India and its speedy failure was foretold. But the Governor-General knew what he wanted, and for nearly four years the Board did that which he wanted and did it well. Henry Lawrence took to himself the political and military duties, the management of the sirdars, the raising of Sikh and Punjabi corps, and the disarmament of the old army; John was responsible for finance and civil administration; and Mr. Mansel, a civilian of distinction and a philosopher to boot, for judicial affairs. Under the control of the Board were more than fifty commissioners, deputies, and assistants, Henry’s Punjabis having been reinforced by a number of highly trained civilians,¹ who had sat with John Lawrence at the feet of James Thomason in the North-West Provinces.

It is not difficult to realise that the Punjab Board had been set a task impossible of speedy and satisfactory accomplishment by any save a Hercules among administrators. On the one hand a conquered people, sullen and vicious, brave and apt in war, insolent in proportion to

¹ These included Montgomery, Macleod, Barnes, Raikes, Cust, and the Thorntons.

their ignorance, hating the foreigner and resolved to place obstacles in the way of reform; a vast country, stretching for five hundred miles north to south and nearly as much east to west, from the snows to the tropical desert, containing fruitful valleys, plains yellow with corn, and arid wastes of great extent, a country without roads and, practically, without laws, where—

. . . . the good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

On the other hand a few Englishmen, as determined to triumph over all obstacles as were their subjects to obstruct, ruling in order to serve, with a singleness of heart and a devotion to duty pleasant for Englishmen to contemplate. The Punjab had been conquered once by the sword; they were about to effect its further conquest after another fashion.

No mild Hindus were these Punjabis, but lovers of strife, whose sires had lived by the strength of their own right arms, and the Board's first need was to disarm the people and so render hopeless any attempt to break out. The next move would be to take away any desire for such an outbreak, to turn hatred into respect, to make plain to the conquered that their rulers were working to befriend them, not to despoil; to convince them that less licence might be consistent with greater freedom.

In those days the Punjabi carried arms as a matter of course, and the disarming called for tact, firmness, and knowledge of character. Even those who, in their wisdom, recognised the futility of a third attempt to break the power of the "Great Lord Company," objected strongly to the surrender of their weapons of defence in a land where violence had run riot, where human life was held as naught. The Punjab was still ravaged by robber-bands,

whose members were often the best men of a district, for their profession was held in no dishonour.

To Sir Henry Lawrence had been entrusted the charge of military affairs, and he disarmed the populace with little difficulty. In the Derajat, the country between the Indus and the Afghan hills, sanction was given to retain arms for defence against the tribesmen. Here is the memorandum he issued for the use of officers engaged in the work:—

“Immediately on your arrival [in each village] call the headmen, and inform them that it is the order of the Durbar that they give up *all* arms and ammunition, and allow two hours for their doing so; keep your men together, and on the alert; do not search, but give the headmen distinctly to understand, that if arms are hereafter discovered to be in their villages, they will be individually held to be responsible, and will be liable to imprisonment and to have all their property confiscated. Take a note of the names of the headmen who appear before you. Inform them that no man in their villages is henceforward permitted to carry arms unless he is in the service of the State.”¹

He enrolled a number of the disbanded soldiers in the new cavalry and infantry regiments, and his famous Punjab Irregular Frontier Force (the “Piffers”) was made subject to the Board, not to the Commander-in-Chief.² These Punjabi Irregulars, whose duty was to shepherd five hundred miles of frontier, speedily became at least equal in spirit to the best regiments in the sepoy army, and they were far superior in physique. They were mainly recruited from

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 172-173.

² The P.I.F.F.—it was known as “Nobody’s Child”—was not placed under the Commander-in-Chief until more than thirty years later. It ceased to exist as a separate force on March 31, 1903, after fifty years of continual warfare. Probably no body of troops has done so much fighting in a similar period,

the Punjabi Mohammedans and frontiersmen of one or other of the Pathan tribes, with a sprinkling of Sikh and Hindu Jats. Later, as their suspicions were allayed, the Sikhs enlisted in greater numbers, and the superiority of the Irregulars became more marked. The Punjabi Mohammedan has never received the recognition his services have deserved. He fought against and for Ranjit Singh, and formed a large proportion of the redoubtable Khalsa army. But the designation *Sikh*, being short and easy, has been stretched to include the more unwieldy term *Punjabi Mohammedan*, and these followers of the Prophet were the men whom Lawrence and Edwardes and Nicholson sent down to capture Delhi, while the Sikhs of the Manjha, to whom most of the credit has been given, held aloof. To this day many regiments known as "Sikhs" contain only two or three companies of the disciples of Govind, who are, indeed, found in equal numbers in most of the Punjabi regiments and Bengal Lancers.

The Corps of Guides was the most wonderful of the new troops raised by Sir Henry Lawrence. It will be remembered that, while still a subaltern, he had recommended the formation of such a corps, and as Regent, in 1846, he had been able to carry out his long-deferred scheme, starting with a single troop of horse and two companies of infantry, and Lieutenant Lumsden (afterwards General Sir Harry Lumsden) was placed in command. "The grand object of the corps," to quote Major Hodson, who helped Lawrence to raise the Guides, "is to train a body of men in peace to be efficient in war; not only to be acquainted with localities, roads, rivers, hills, ferries, and passes, but have a good idea of the produce and supplies available in any part of the country; to give accurate information, not running open-mouthed to say that 10,000 horsemen and a thousand guns are coming (in true native style), but to stop to see whether it may not be really only a common

cart and a few wild horsemen who are kicking up the dust; to call twenty-five by its right name, and not say fifty for short, as most natives do. This, of course, wants a great deal of careful instruction and attention. Beyond this the officers should give a tolerably correct sketch and report of any country through which they may pass, be *au fait* at routes and means of feeding troops, and above all—and here you come close upon practical duties—keep an eye on the doings ‘of the neighbours’ and the state of the country, so as to be able to give such information as may lead to any outbreak being nipped in the bud.”¹ Lumsden laid down as requirements for his cavalry, not only proved courage and good horsemanship, but that every trooper must also be “a good horsemaster, whose horse is as the apple of his eye.”

The Corps of Guides was increased to a thousand men and was recruited along the frontier regardless of race, caste, or creed. The pay was good; a pension provided for the future; the prospect of fighting and excitement was as promising as could be desired by the most fastidious Pathan, and, above all, the corps was to be select. None but men noted for pluck, endurance, local knowledge, and presence of mind could wear the khaki of the Guides. As to moral character, that was another story.

To stiffen the corps Sir Henry asked Jung Bahadur for permission to recruit a number of Gurkhas, and a company of these tough little warriors was formed. It was thought that their known loyalty would be a safeguard against possible treachery or impatience of discipline—failings too common among the tribesmen.

But the corps has ever, even in time of greatest trial, proved its trustworthiness. Though composed of many races and religions, no race or sect can claim precedence in respect to loyalty and courage.

¹ Captain Trotter, *A Leader of Light Horse*, p. 58.

As an illustration of the manner in which recruiting was carried on in those early days, and of the kind of men who have made the name of the Guides so renowned, the following anecdotes may be related.

Shortly after the raising of the corps a notorious free-booter, Fateh Khan, kept the Guides fruitlessly employed for many weary months:—

But ever a blight on their labours lay
And ever their quarry would vanish away;
The word of a scout,—a march by night,
A rush through the mist,—a scattering fight,
The flare of a village,—the tally of slain
And . . . the [Khan] was abroad on the raid again.

In despair Lumsden despatched a message conveying his admiration and esteem for the robber chief and his band, pointing out how injurious this exasperating species of warfare must be to the tempers and morals of all concerned, and explaining how charmed he would be to appoint Fateh Khan as Ressaldar and to take over all his men into the Guides Cavalry. The desperadoes accepted the offer and distinguished themselves greatly.

Thirty years later the Guides Cavalry surprised a body of Afghan horse at Ali Musjid. Many of these broke through and galloped for their lives, but one man soon changed his horse's pace to a walk, and, turning round, shook his sword in defiance of the levelled carbines. The colonel, Sir Francis Jenkins, at once bade his men cease fire and, riding forward, called out:

“Who are you that care so little for your life?”

“I am Sultan Jan Kazilbash,” was the reply, “and I don't care a bunch of grapes for you and your Guides.”

“You're a d—— brave man, anyway,” said the colonel. “Turn your horse and join my regiment.”

“Well, so I will,” Sultan Jan replied, and straightway rode into the ranks of his late enemies, took the oath of

allegiance to the Great Queen, and fought for her throughout the Afghan War.

The Corps of Guides quickly justified Lawrence's youthful recommendations, and in actions too numerous to be related here they have maintained their brilliant reputation.

A police force of more than fifteen thousand men was raised, more than half of whom were military police. Their duties were to keep the peace in disturbed districts, to break up dacoit bands, to patrol the ever-lengthening highways, to protect the traveller from the horrors of the mysterious, semi-religious epidemic of Thuggee, to bring its devotees to justice—and here John Lawrence's detective faculty was brought into play—and, in short, to make

. . . sure to each his own,
That he reap where he hath sown.

In the second year of the Board's administration the number of dacoits sentenced to death had fallen to 25 per cent. of the previous year's total, and by the end of the third year dacoity had practically ceased to exist in the Punjab. In his Minute of May 1853, the Governor-General asserted that "life and property are now, and have for some time been, more secure within the bounds of the Punjab, which we have held only for four years, than they are in the province of Bengal, which has been ours for nearly a century."¹

Under Ranjit Singh the cultivator and the trader had been mercilessly exploited for the benefit of the army, and John Lawrence was not slow to perceive that the duties levied on every commodity were ruining the country's chance of prosperity. He wanted money for public works on a grand scale, to raise the Punjab from the state to which it had been brought by fifty years' continuous fighting. He was ambitious, not only to make both ends meet in spite of the unavoidably heavy expense of the new adminis-

¹ Captain Trotter's *Life of Lord Dalhousie*, p. 100.

tration, but also to hand over a surplus. Moreover—most powerful of all motives—he wished to promote the welfare of the millions for whom he was responsible.

He urged and secured the abolition of taxes on at least forty articles, and relied for his chief source of revenue upon the land-tax. The wisdom of his fiscal policy was soon apparent: in spite of the lighter assessment the Punjab began to pay its way; the revenue before long increased by 50 per cent., and his dream of a surplus was more than realised. At the end of the first three years the Punjab had made a profit of more than a million sterling. Foremost of the public works undertaken by the Board were the extension of the Grand Trunk Road from Delhi to Peshawar, a stretch of seven hundred miles, and the construction of a highway from Lahore to Multan, and of the Bari Doab Canal, a boon conferred upon the cultivators of the most important and most populous district of the Punjab. Colonel Robert Napier, who had been brought in by Sir Henry as chief engineer, with Lieutenant Alec Taylor and Lieutenant Dyas as assistants, carried out the schemes of the Board in such wise that his roads and canals are still accounted among the greatest works in Asia. The Bari Doab Canal with its numerous arteries comprises a length of considerably more than a thousand miles.

No one taking an interest in the Lawrence government of the Punjab—from the time of Henry's first appointment there as "Regent"—can fail to be struck by the way in which names destined to be famous crop up in every district and every branch of the Punjab service. Hardly a name, be it of subaltern or deputy-assistant, but brings before the mind some scene, crowned by success, with which its owner is peculiarly identified. Edwardes at Multan and at Peshawar; Robert Napier of *Magdala*; his assistant, Alexander Taylor, before Delhi, calmly planning

and carrying out the works which destroyed all hope of the Mutiny's success; Montgomery at Lahore; "Uncle"¹ Abbott among the wild men of the North Country whom his goodness had tamed; John Nicholson wherever the fight was fiercest and the need greatest—but the roll is too long. It was not chance that flung them into the Punjab at an early age. Never did the Lawrences forget, never did they underestimate, how much they owed to their assistants; nor did their disciples permit any one to remain in ignorance of the debt *they* owed to the wise and patient and Christian training of their chiefs.

After three years' work the Board was able to report that "1349 miles of road have been cleared and constructed; 2487 miles have been traced, and 5272 miles surveyed, all exclusive of minor cross and branch roads."² Waste lands were reclaimed; trees were planted by the million and existing forests preserved; the peasant's claims to his fields were satisfied; the breeds of cattle and horses were improved; tobacco, cotton, tea, sugarcane, and other crops were introduced from Bengal, and all industries encouraged. Before a Lawrence first wielded power in the Punjab the land was practically roadless. Now town was joined to town and village to village by the highways that ran out north, south, east, and west, across rivers and canals, through jungle and desert; and it came to pass that the people of the Punjab blessed the name of Lawrence; and the brothers thanked God that they had such good men to carry out and improve their schemes, and to suggest and initiate others of their own. And Lord Dalhousie visited the Punjab,³ saw the convincing

¹ General Jas. Abbott.

² Quoted by Mr. Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 264.

³ It has been said with truth that had Lord Dalhousie possessed the gift of sympathetic imagination in a greater degree he would have been an even greater Governor-General. But it must not be supposed that in an ordinary capacity he would have been thought

evidences of prosperity, and was impressed by the good order and the respect shown to the law. He was proud of his "pet province" and of the men who had served the state so well. In the older "Regulation" provinces progress had been slow; the Punjab, where greater difficulties had been anticipated, rushed to the front and stayed there.

But a price had to be paid for success. The working days of the staff were not limited to the hours popularly associated with Government offices at home. John Lawrence was without doubt the hardest worked of all, and luckily he was the best able to bear the strain. Yet even he had to give in at last, but not until he was near to death. Sir Henry, who had never recovered from the Burmese fever, was the first to succumb. The "Punjabis" were no shirkers, but one assistant after another had to be sent away to the hills or home to England; and John remained at his desk uncomplaining, doing the work of two, then of three, then of half a dozen, with his wife as private secretary.

Sir Henry sought relief in travel, examining the progress of the new works, paying visits to the chiefs and headmen, inspecting his Irregulars who were shepherding the frontier, testing the work of his subalterns from Multan to Hazara, from Peshawar to Amballa, giving them sound advice and that meed of praise for good work which he never withheld; and the young men of the Punjab worshipped him. In this way he could make the best use of that rare gift, described by Mr. Merivale, as "his singular power of so deficient in that quality. In the course of this Punjab tour he visited Dhulip Singh at Lahore, and was touched by the "winning grace" of the boy-maharaja, and when he was greeted with a "bright smile" and the words "I am very happy to see you here," Dalhousie thought of all the boy had lost through his instrumentality, "and for a moment my words were checked, and I could not help putting my arm round his neck and drawing him to me."—Lee Warner's *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie*, vol. i. p. 278.

attracting to him those among whom he lived, and especially those he commanded." Perhaps the most wonderful feature of the Punjab administration was its *tone*, and for this the magic of Sir Henry's personality was responsible.

Without doubt such an arrangement was good for the Punjab, but it bore hardly upon John, who would also have preferred the free and roaming life, "thirty to forty miles a day on horseback," to his never-ending office work in Lahore. But each brother was doing what was best for the state. Though loved by many and admired by all, John Lawrence did not possess his brother's magnetic personality; the influence that caused the arrogant Sikh for the first time in his life to desire to gain approbation for its own sake was not John's to wield. Not only did the more influential among the Punjabis love Henry Lawrence above all men, they also feared him more, being convinced of his power as well as of his goodness, and John readily admitted that his brother had "a stronger grip of men." By his tours from end to end of the land, therefore, the President of the Board learned still more of the conditions of his people—how his measures had affected the well-being of the people, in what manner further improvements could best be made, and where it might be wise to ease the pressure of some too-rigorous reform. His subjects, having thorough confidence in their ruler's wish to further their interests, told him more than they would have revealed to any other man, and they knew him well enough to perceive the folly of any attempt to impose upon him.

On the other hand John easily surpassed his brother in finance, in his mastery of details and of all business matters. An impressive and dogged worker, less emotional and impulsive, his mind, equally with his body, was better equipped to defy the effects of overwork. In the years

immediately following the annexation, Sir Henry's exceptional insight into Oriental character, his personal acquaintance with the people and with his assistants in their own homes, was all-important. He acted in accordance with the advice he gave to subordinates.

" . . . I hope you always bear in mind that in a new country, especially a wild one, promptness, accessibility, brevity, and kindness are the best engines of government. To have as few forms as possible¹ . . . to be considerate and kind, not expecting too much from ignorant people; to make no change, unless certain of decided improvement in the substitute; light assessment, considering the claims and privileges, even when somewhat extravagant, of the privileged classes, especially where they affect Government, and not Ryots [peasants]." ²

But as the country became more settled, and as, thanks largely to the personal intercourse, the Punjabis gained confidence in the good faith of the dominant race; as the assistants, inspired by the example of their chief, grew better able to stand alone, the routine work increased and overshadowed the personal; and then John Lawrence was found to be more in touch with the business of the state, and of the two brothers he was indispensable.

When the Board had been in existence rather more than twelve months Sir Henry, already enfeebled, and quite unfit to support a summer in the plains, applied for permission to recruit in the Kashmir highlands, where, though on pleasure bent, he proposed to acquaint himself with the methods of government employed by his old acquaintance, Gulab Singh.

" . . . I need not assure you," wrote Lord Dalhousie, who was plainly anxious lest the extra burden should prove

¹ In later years the complaint has been that the Punjab is cursed by overmuch law to the undoing of the immutable *ryot* and to the profit of the money-lender to whom his fields are mortgaged.

² *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 172.

too much for John, "that I have personally every desire to assent to what may be for your benefit; but, however much I might wish to consent to measures advantageous to your health, I am bound to say in candour that I could only consent to this scheme this year, in the hope and belief that it will render such absence unnecessary in future years. . . . Your absence will necessarily confine at present the other members at Lahore. Of Mr. Mansel's habits I know nothing; but it is impossible that, after the active movements of your brother's life for so many years, imprisonment in one place can be otherwise than bad for him. Previous to your departure, therefore, before the rains, I would request that he would come up to Simla, and meet me there."¹

John Lawrence was at length constrained to go to Simla for a fortnight, beyond which time Lord Dalhousie could not persuade him to stay away from his work. He himself was granting no leave except sick-leave—and that only in really urgent cases—and though he had gone to the hills on the command of his chief, he would make no exception to his rule. He refused a holiday to the Governor-General's near relative, Lord W. Hay, though a feeler was put forth by Lord Dalhousie himself. "The *Punjab head*," wrote Mr. Bosworth Smith, "came to be a proverbial expression for the break-down which was the result of overwork."

At last even the strongest of all had to pay the penalty. In October 1850 John Lawrence broke down completely, his life being in danger; and once more he rallied by force of will, and within little more than a week was able to start on a six months' tour with the Governor-General, whose esteem he had completely won. "I am terrified at the thought of your being compelled to give up work," Lord Dalhousie wrote as soon as he heard of the collapse, ". . . and I plead with you to spare yourself for a time as

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 158.

earnestly as I would plead to save my own right hand.”¹

He retired again to Simla where his wife and children were, and broke down again even in that refuge. The doctors agreed that he must leave India, but he refused to take their advice. “I have made up my mind not to go home,” he informed Lord Dalhousie, who feared for his life. “It would, I think, be suicidal in me, at my age and with the claims my children have on me, to do so. My health is very uncertain; I do not think that I have more than three or four years of good honest work left in me. In May 1855 I shall have served my time, and be entitled to my annuity, and, by that time, I shall have saved a sufficiency for my own moderate wants and to bring up my children. Without making up my mind absolutely to retire at that period, I wish to be in a position to be able to do so.”²

Little did he anticipate the future.

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 311.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 315.

CHAPTER XVII

(1850-1852)

THE DERRY SCHOOLFELLOWS

The Koh-i-nur—Robert Montgomery—Story of a Christmas Box—
Gulab Singh and the Lawrence Asylums.

THE simplicity of the brothers in affairs, which by many would be considered of the highest importance, is clearly illustrated by Mr. Bosworth Smith's story of their adventure with the Koh-i-nur. Among the state jewels of the Sikh court was this famous "Mountain of Light," which, after passing from the Mogul to the Persian, and thence to the Afghan from whom it was wrested by Ranjit Singh, was now to be presented to Queen Victoria. The diamond was placed in the charge of Sir Henry, who, deeming his brother the stronger and more practical guardian, entrusted it to John, who pocketed the little box and straightway forgot it.

Some weeks later came an official letter from Lord Dalhousie ordering that the diamond be sent at once to her Majesty. The President received the message during a meeting of the Board, and John advised him to send it off promptly.

"Why, you've got it," said the senior member.

John's clear intellect took in the full horror of the situation, and he feared he was a ruined man, for the gem had never been seen by him since the day it had been given into his keeping.

Crimes without number had been committed for jewels not a quarter its value, and who would believe his story—

that he had forgotten its existence and flung it aside in the pocket of an old waistcoat? The Koh-i-nur was enough to tempt any man—to madden, to intoxicate, even the most upright. Of what avail then to rely upon his known integrity? His story might be officially believed, but he knew that men would shake their heads and regard him askance.

Yet without a sign of perturbation he casually replied: "Oh yes, of course, I forgot all about it," and calmly proceeded to discuss the business before the meeting with all his usual alertness and without sign of preoccupation. But we can guess how he longed for the end—how he hurried in search of his servant, who chanced to remember taking a small box from his master's discarded clothes. He explained where he had put the worthless box containing the bit of glass, and the Koh-i-nur was safe.

In November 1850 Mr. Mansel had been appointed Resident of Nagpur, and the vacant place at the Board had been filled by Mr. Robert Montgomery, Commissioner of Lahore, a Derry schoolfellow of the Lawrences. On Christmas Day 1851 Sir Henry and Lady Lawrence entertained their colleagues to dinner.

"I wonder," exclaimed the President abruptly, "what the two poor old Simpsons are doing at this moment, and whether they have had any better dinner than usual to-day?"

Naturally enough, the coincidence had caused their thoughts to revert to the days at Foyle College where "the two poor old Simpsons" had been ushers.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," Sir Henry proposed. "The Simpsons must be very old, and, I should think, nearly blind; they cannot be well off; let us each put down fifty pounds and send it to them to-morrow as 'a Christmas-box from a far-off land, with the good wishes of three of their old pupils, now members of the Punjab Board of Admini-

stration at Lahore.' " The others readily agreed, and Sir George Lawrence, who had lately become Political Agent at Meywar, also sent on his contribution.

The reply, " almost illegible from the writer's tears," has unhappily been lost, but Mr. Bosworth Smith has been able to record ¹ " its general drift and its most salient points. It began: ' My dear kind boys ; ' but the pen of the old man had afterwards been drawn through the word ' boys ' and there had been substituted for it the word ' friends.' It went on to thank the donors for their most generous gift, which would go far to keep them from want during the short time that might be left to them ; but, far above the actual value of the present, was the preciousness of the thought that they had not been forgotten by their old pupils, in what *seemed* to be the very high position to which they had risen. He did not know what the ' Board of Administration ' meant, but he felt sure it was something very important ; and he added with childlike simplicity, that he had looked out the Punjab in ' the old school atlas ' which they had so often used together, but he could not find either it or Lahore. . . . It only remains to be added that the writer of the letter, old as he was, lived on till he saw one of his three pupils in the flesh once more ; and that, when the citizens of Londonderry were giving a banquet to Sir Robert Montgomery, who had just then returned from India, with the honours of the Mutiny thick upon him, the half-blind old schoolmaster managed, with the help of a ticket that had been given him, to be present also . . . and it may safely be asserted that, by this time, he hardly needed to look into ' the old school atlas ' to find where the Punjab lay ; for it was from the Punjab that India had been saved, and it was to his three old pupils and benefactors, Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, and Robert Montgomery, that its salvation was admitted to be

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 321-323.

chiefly due." Well founded was the sister's boast that Henry "never lost sight of any one in whom he had taken the slightest interest."

The cares of his high office had not caused Sir Henry's interest in philanthropic work to wane. His zeal for the salvation of the white children in India was as ardent as ever, and while President of the Punjab Board he was placed in a peculiarly embarrassing situation by the offer of donations from natives of rank towards the up-keep of his asylum. Much good might be done with the money, and he hoped that the offers had been prompted by good-feeling towards himself, and were expressions of a desire on the part of the donors to identify themselves with the interests of the dominant race, now that the sense of humiliation had become less poignant. He was naturally reluctant to risk a conversion of would-be friends into decided foes by appearing to snub any such manifestation of good-feeling, and, inclined to accept, he asked the Governor-General's approval. The reply was unfavourable, and the danger of misunderstanding, pointed out by Lord Dalhousie, must be admitted.

Paying a sincere tribute to his lieutenant's "integrity and honour," which "would prevent your ever taking a gift for the Asylum under circumstances which would interfere with your public duty," he urged that the acceptance of the offers could, and would, be easily misinterpreted; that the inevitable caviller would be sure to aver that the donors were purchasing the favour of their unsuspecting ruler. "I do not believe," the letter went on to say, "that any one of the chiefs contributes to such an institution as the Asylum, from which they and theirs derive no direct benefit, except from a desire to please you, and to gain favour with the local or Supreme Government. I think your detractors will very probably try to represent that you are using your official position virtually to obtain sup-

port for an object in which you take a strong personal interest from persons who are under your authority. . . .”¹

Having suffered many rebukes at the hands of his chief, Sir Henry probably classed this letter as an additional rebuff, perhaps less objectionable in tone. But Lord Dalhousie was the wiser of the two in his conclusions, and there is no reason to imagine any motive beyond a desire to shield his “touchy” subordinate from the possibly unpleasant consequences of his own impulsiveness. That he was not wholly right with regard to facts was proved in the following year, when Gulab Singh gave a big donation to the asylum *after* Sir Henry’s removal to Rajputana, whence his influence could no longer be of use to the Maharaja of Kashmir. Though the gift was made “from a desire to please” his benefactor, it could not have been in order “to gain favour.”

The extracts hitherto given from the correspondence between the Governor-General and the President of the Punjab Board have been indicative of strained relations. This is perhaps necessary in order to lead up to the severance of Sir Henry Lawrence’s connection with the province with which his name will always be coupled. Not all the letters that passed between them, however, were after this fashion, for Lord Dalhousie had a high regard for this lieutenant whom he considered impracticable. He could even be playful with him on occasion.

In the early days of 1852 Lord Stanley (the late Earl of Derby), who was qualifying for his future position by a personal acquaintance with Eastern problems, begged Sir Henry’s permission to accompany him on one of his tours along the Afghan border. Lord Dalhousie feared lest the Afridis and the wild tribesmen of the Derajat should take the opportunity to pay off old scores. He wrote to warn Sir Henry:

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 169.

“ . . . If any ill-starred accident should happen, it will make a good deal of difference whether it happens to Lord Stanley and Sir Henry Lawrence, or to John Tomkins and Bill Higgins . . . and, altogether, I don't like it. One can't prohibit a man going where he wishes to go in British territory; but I wish you would put him off it, if you possibly can.”¹

But under the ægis of Henry Lawrence the traveller was safe.

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 165-166.

CHAPTER XVIII

(1849-1853)

INCOMPATIBLE IDEALS

Controversy with Sir Charles Napier—The Shadow of the Mutiny—The Jaghirdars—Irreconcilable Differences of Opinion between the Brothers—Both offer to Resign—Lord Dalhousie accepts Henry's Resignation—He leaves the Punjab—Grief of the Natives.

THE years during which the Punjab was administered by the Council of Three were marked by important controversies. That between its President and Lord Dalhousie has already been touched upon; Sir Charles Napier's attacks upon the Board, and the painful, but honourable, disputes between the brothers, must be taken in their turn.

The fighting general—conqueror of Sind and would-have-been conqueror of the Punjab had not Gujerat forestalled him—was one of the first soldiers of the age. He was the hero of all ranks in the army, and deservedly so; and though his writings and sayings—racy and candid to a fault—may provoke blended amusement and protest, it is not easy to regard their author without affection, or at least without an inclination to “be to his faults a little blind.” To judge Sir Charles Napier by his own writings or by his brother's violent partiality would be unfair. His services in the field were great; he governed Sind with justice and benevolence; and it should ever be remembered in his favour how his wise humanity saved more than one large town of the North of England from

civil war during the Chartist agitation, when, as general in command of the Northern District, he resisted the demands and ignored the threats of the magistrates and employers of labour, who were urging him to disperse mobs with the bullet and the bayonet; and he dared to show sympathy with the toilers. He invited the Chartist leaders to confer with him, and, by holding an artillery display for their benefit, he demonstrated the hopelessness of their cause should they appeal to force. They were convinced that he held them in the hollow of his hand—convinced also that for all his sympathy Napier would do his duty as a soldier if a fight should be forced upon him. But the Lawrences did not know this side of the great soldier's character. Sir Henry's opinion of the Commander-in-Chief was prejudiced from the first by his sympathy with Outram in the Sind quarrel, but in later life he acknowledged that he had judged Napier too harshly.

Though nearly seventy when sent out to supersede Lord Gough, Sir Charles was as energetic as any subaltern and as impatient of restraint. We know that men whose one conspicuous talent has been allowed by their fellows are wont sadly to reflect that the world is slow to recognise their possession of some other gift, upon which, having it not, they set a greater value. The humorous writer, to whom the public has been kind, regrets that he should be esteemed so highly on that account, and that he alone should be aware of the great superiority of his more serious work; and the actor who has attained success in comedy may cherish a grudge against the public taste that will have none of his tragedy.

So the new Commander-in-Chief, not satisfied with the recognition of his ever-victorious generalship, firmly believed himself a heaven-born statesman. Too late then to subdue the Khalsa, he made no attempt to conceal

his desire to govern the Sikh people—as an autocrat, not as a member of a board. Sir Charles Napier was no mountebank posturing to dazzle the world, but, confident in his own ability, he loved to overcome obstacles and was not content to stand aside and watch another confront the giant. Incidentally he seems to have entertained some vague hope that the youthful viceroy might be induced to depute to him the conduct of all Indian affairs, military and civil.

He was quickly disillusioned. He had been sent to India by the voice of the nation, against the wishes of the Company's directors. We are told by his biographer¹ that on his first meeting with the Governor-General the latter straightway declared war. "I have been warned, Sir Charles Napier," said he, "not to let you encroach upon my authority, but I will take damned good care you shall not." And his contempt for Lord Dalhousie became greater than for the Lawrences. This story is, however, hardly consistent with Lord Dalhousie's account of his first impressions of Napier as recorded in his diary.² He liked Napier, "never had a more agreeable inmate of my house," and believed they would "work cordially together," though the prominence given to "Politicals" in the Punjab "is enough, in Sir Charles's eyes, to damn Utopia."

"Boards rarely have any talent," said Napier, and he worked to the end that a military government should be established in the Punjab on the lines which, as he stoutly maintained, had done so well in Sind. Certainly Napier's administration of the Beluchi possession had been a work of genius, but the idea of converting *their* Punjab into another Sind roused the Lawrences to meet the attack in characteristic fashion. Henry rushed forth from his tent

¹ *Life of Sir Charles James Napier*, vol. iv. p. 195.

² Lee Warner's *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie*, vol. i. p. 310.

to do battle with the challenger; John wrote a Minute, smiled impassively, and went on with his work.

"I would rather be governor of the Punjab than Commander-in-Chief," Sir Charles wrote to his brother, and explained why so desirable an arrangement was impossible. "Had I been here for Lord Dalhousie to put at the head of the Punjab I believe he could not have done it; my suspicion is that he was ordered to put Lawrence there."¹ Though he drew the bow at a venture his "suspicion" was not very wide of the mark. When Sir Henry Lawrence went home in 1847 it was understood that the chief post in the Punjab was to be kept open for him. Had Lord Dalhousie been quite free to choose his own lieutenant, in all probability there would have been no Board of Administration.

Napier assured the Governor-General that "no one can entertain a higher opinion than I do of the zeal, energy, courage, and, in some cases, of the abilities" of the members of the Board, "but the system placed them in a wrong position, and their personal good qualities only tended to increase difficulties and embarrass the Commander-in-Chief."²

He admitted that Henry Lawrence was "a good fellow," though he "doubted his capacity"; he was inclined to think John clever, "but a man may have good sense and yet not be fit to rule a large country." After a visit to Peshawar during the Afridi troubles his opinion of one member of the Lawrence family seems to have improved. "Colonel [George] Lawrence is a right good soldier and a right good fellow, and my opinion of him is high; but he tried the advising scheme a little with me at Kohat."³

This last sentence gives the keynote of Napier's character.

He wrote a treatise on "Indian Mis-government" in which he proved to his own satisfaction that India was

¹ *Life of Sir Charles James Napier*, vol. iv. p. 168.

² *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 177.

³ *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 281.

going to the dogs and—particularly in the Punjab—was governed by incompetents. His criticisms were always fearless, generally honest, and occasionally justified. The remedies he proposed lost much of their claim to consideration through the picturesqueness of his language. John replied officially for the Board, and Henry carried the war into the enemy's country by the medium of the *Calcutta Review*.

The matter of the Punjab Frontier Force wrung the withers of the Commander-in-Chief, who, not unnaturally, considered that all the troops, irregulars as well as regulars, should be under his control. Sir Henry Lawrence, who had raised the efficient little army that was to behave so well in 1857, and contribute so greatly to the crushing of the Mutiny, thought otherwise. He urged that his irregulars should rather be considered as military police to keep the peace of the border and be responsible to the Board. John Lawrence stated his opinion that the Board had already too much work, and that he should prefer the transfer of the Frontier Force to Sir Charles Napier. At the same time he expressed his conviction that his brother would make a better use of the troops, and that, should Lord Dalhousie decide to retain them under the Board, the complete control should be given to Sir Henry personally.

The Governor-General did so decide, and Sir Henry soon had his pick of the Company's officers to command his regiments, so great had become the prestige of the Punjab. Napier did not regard his opponents with any increase of approval after this rebuff, and whether by chance or by skill in his search for the weak points in the Lawrence and Dalhousie armour, he made his reputation as one who was also among the prophets. The controversy is important in that it affects Sir Henry's right to be considered as the seer of the Mutiny. It is certain that both he and Napier did utter words of warning, and that both made suggestions

which were ignored. But Napier holds the advantage, for he left India convinced that the Oudh regiments would prove untrustworthy in time of temptation, whereas Lawrence pooh-poohed his warnings as contradictory and extravagant—as they certainly were.

Napier's opinions lost in weight by the violence of his language, his evident desire to discredit the Government of India, and the meddlesome omniscience that impelled him to criticise unfavourably every step taken without his approval. Sir Henry's vision was less clear than usual because his pride would not permit him to agree with the conqueror of Sind. The very fact of Napier's advocacy would render any theory unsound in his eyes; and all acts and words of a Lawrence were of necessity misguided and weak to Napier. Probably neither would have taken quite the line he did take had his opponent been any other man. Had they been friends, willing to combine in advocating the reform of the Indian army—a work in which they would have had Lord Dalhousie's support—the Mutiny might not have shaken the British Raj to its foundations. But both were hindered by prejudice and both were in the wrong.

During Napier's short tenancy of the chief command in India, the 66th Bengal Infantry showed a mutinous spirit. He disbanded the regiment and gave its colours and designation to the Nasiri Gurkha Battalion, a corps of irregulars who were glad enough to become enrolled in the regular army with higher pay. He justified his high-handed action by tracing the mutinous spirit to "the dangerous influence which the Brahman supremacy had assumed," and the lesson of the Mutiny proved him right.

The honourable career and the pension offered by the Company were appreciated by Brahmans and Mohammedans alike, and the *poorbeahs* certainly regarded their services as indispensable. Brahman priests had said, in effect: "If

we choose to forbid Hindus to enlist what would become of John Company then? India could not be held." Therefore, said Sir Charles Napier in the grandiloquent language he frequently affected: "All was on the balance when I flung the Goorkha battalion into the scale, as Brennus did his sword, and mutiny, having no Camillus, was crushed."¹ And again: "... with the Goorkha race we can so reinforce our Indian army that our actual force in India would be greater than that of the Sepoy army, numerous as it is."²

In the *Calcutta Review* Sir Henry Lawrence controverted these assertions, and stated, from his personal knowledge of Nepal, that Gurkhas were less useful and much less numerous than Napier seemed to imagine, and that his notions were absurd.

Both were right and both wrong. Napier saw the danger and proposed a remedy, which, modified and adapted, would have done much to obviate it, for the Gurkhas in 1857 proved that Napier's estimate of their value and fidelity was not exaggerated, and England would have been glad if the four battalions had been eight. When the army was re-organised after the Mutiny Lawrence was found to have been right in combating Napier's theory that Gurkhas could take the place of Punjabi and Hindustani sepoys. The supply was too limited, the men are too small and short of leg for the cavalry or artillery, and they stand the heat of the plains no better than the white man.

The Punjab Board breathed more freely when the impetuous soldier resigned and departed from India's shores with "the piece of soap and two towels" which were popularly understood to compose his full campaigning kit. Happily for "the Punjab which they are governing so

¹ *Life of Sir Charles James Napier*, vol. iv. p. 263.

² *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 248.

badly," Lord Dalhousie was as completely out of sympathy with his chief soldier as were the Lawrences.

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In their antagonism to Napier's revolutionary schemes the brothers were united; in the measures adopted for the moral and material welfare of their province they were not divided; but with regard to the treatment of a certain class they were steadfastly opposed. For a time there was hope that a working compromise might be found. The hope was vain; their views diverged more and more, and the situation became intolerable to the two great-hearted men who would willingly have died for one another.

One of the minor points at issue concerned the payment of the land-tax. John had abolished the old system of payment in kind, which opened the way to many abuses. The cash-payment was approved by the husbandmen until, in an unusually good season, the crops were too heavy to be easily disposed of, and permission to pay in kind was requested by the farmers. Sir Henry was moved by their pleading and did not see why exceptions might not be made. John would not give way; he appreciated the importance of the principle.

They were also at variance on the question of the extent and number of public works to which they should commit themselves. Henry Lawrence's mind was intensely conservative *and* progressive. He wished to push onward regardless of cost, and his more cautious brother was compelled to check his ardour.

Henry's ideal was an India moving forward on her own lines of progress. He desired that the alien officials should inculcate English honour and justice and honesty, regard for truth and love of duty, embodying those ideals in the forms of government, and adapting those forms to Eastern modes of thought—to supply the cloth and allow her to cut

it to her own fashion.¹ John Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie deemed success more probable if they could bring Mahomet to the mountain, and they hoped to adapt the natives of India to the civilisation of the West.

But they differed most on the subject of the treatment of the *jaghirdars* of the Punjab, a question that affected to a greater or lesser degree almost every point of policy with which they had to deal. When the Norman Conqueror had vanquished the Saxons he made grants of land to his nobles; so Ranjit Singh, as his dominion grew, gave to his favourite soldiers a *jaghir*, or lien upon the revenue of some district. The *jaghirdar*, or holder of a *jaghir*, was not a landholder, as by Eastern custom the land must always belong to the Crown; but he collected the land-tax and, sometimes remitting a fixed sum to his sovereign, he had power to squeeze the cultivator to any extent. In return he could be called upon to render military service to his chief.

This method of revenue assignment, with its inevitable abuses, could not be tolerated by the new Government. Then what was to become of the *jaghirdars*? In effect this was John Lawrence's solution. The *jaghirdars* are a bad lot; for generations they have robbed the peasants, and now is their turn to suffer. The people will gain by the extinction of *jaghirs*, which were given on condition of military or religious service. "We want neither their soldiers nor their prayers."

Sir Henry, granting that the *jaghirdars*, as a whole, were not particularly lovable, pointed out that the fault lay with the custom and tradition of the country. The *sirdars* and *jaghirdars* were powerful once; now they are

¹ "Henry loved all men great and small, was loved by them in return, did not believe that Indian institutions were wholly bad or English wholly good. . . . John had no belief in Indian but perfect faith in English methods of rule."—Thorburn, *The Punjab in Peace and War*, p. 89.

“down”; let the fall be gradual, so that they be not humiliated too greatly. By all means improve the condition of the peasantry, but let the treasury suffer and the coffers of the Punjab be empty rather than raise up on every side powerful enemies of the British Raj, ready to take the first opportunity to strike at the uprooters of their honour.

John would argue, with much truth, that his brother did not appreciate the full significance of empty coffers. Here were they constructing hundreds of miles of canals and thousands of miles of roadway, building bridges, and tanks, dispensaries and schools, maintaining a large frontier force, and an efficient staff in every district to administer justice and to right wrongs, and all this was expensive. Empty the coffers and public works must be stopped. The land-tax had been lightly assessed, and though this would pay in the end, if the jaghirdars were also to be satisfied there would certainly be no funds wherewith to carry out the reforms which were as dear to his brother as to himself. And he intimated that he did not care a brass farthing for the enmity of either sirdars or jaghirdars. They could do little harm while the mass of the people were satisfied with the new regime.

The soldier-brother understood the Oriental well enough to dread lest any humiliation of the aristocracy should inflame the minds even of the peasants they had formerly oppressed. Extortion by the *jaghirdar* they were used to; it was the way and the right of him to whom Fate had given the power, and, had they been in his place, they would have done as he did. But the ways of the sahib they did not understand. Individually many of the sahibs were good men whom they could trust; the *Larens Sahibs* were all three their true friends; so were, in their several districts, Abbott, and Edwardes, and—with bated breath—so was Nikalsain Sahib. But in the mass the

Englishmen were incomprehensible and very foolish, though skilful in the management of war.

Henry Lawrence did not for a moment advocate the retention of the native aristocracy in their present relation to the people. Nor did John propose to strip them naked. The former was prepared to allow the chiefs to retain a certain degree of dignity and rank, and held that justice and mercy demanded that they should be spared unnecessary humiliation, and that policy likewise sanctioned generous treatment, as the nobles would the more readily acquiesce in, and adapt themselves to, the new conditions.

John Lawrence was willing to be generous, but he protested that Henry's generosity was extravagance which the state finances could not support—and here he was unanswerable. Also, that his brother overestimated the sirdars' power for good or evil—and here he was mistaken. When the Mutiny came to test all theories, the nobles, for whom Henry had not pleaded in vain, either remained neutral or gave active and invaluable support to John Lawrence when the clouds were blackest. Wherever the chief men had been treated with consideration there was loyalty. The breach was to become wider and deeper and each began sadly to realise that his well-loved brother's work had ceased to be a complement of his own; that indeed, by the opposition of their ideals—or rather of the means by which the common ideal should be attained—the self-sacrificing efforts of both were being made of little avail. These were the unhappy days when they could no longer feel the joy in well-doing that had hitherto made work a delight.

In the main the elder brother was impracticable, and, had he been supreme, the Punjab would have been bankrupt. On the other hand, without his sympathetic influence John Lawrence and Lord Dalhousie would have raised

up powerful factions against the dominant race. Acting together, neither was able to proceed to extremes and a forced compromise produced the model province.

The effect of this compromise, stated with succinct comprehensiveness by Sir John Lawrence's friend and secretary, the late Sir Richard Temple, has been quoted by Mr. Merivale from the papers of Sir Herbert Edwardes.¹

"Temple, talking with me to-day about Henry and John Lawrence, made some fair remarks as to the general characteristics of Henry as a civil administrator: 'Sir Henry's policy was this:—

"'The revenue: to have very light settlements. In judicial matters: to do as much justice as possible under trees in the open air before the people. In jails: to take immense pains with the prisoners, considering that we were responsible for their lives and health and morals, if we put them into durance. In material improvements: to go ahead at a tremendous pace and cover the country with the means of communication—roads, bridges, etc. In policy: to be very conciliatory to the chiefs of our own territory, very friendly and non-interfering with neighbouring courts.' He remarked generally that it was best for the State that the two brothers were associated together, though it proved so unhappy for themselves. Neither was perfect: each had lessons to learn. Sir Henry would soon have had to close the Treasury, with his ideas of jagheer improvements, light revenue, etc., and John would have had a full revenue but a mutinous country. Both were so naturally truthful and candid that when they had done the mischief they would have owned it and retraced their steps. But by both being together the mischief was prevented. One checked the other. At the same time they confirmed each other's faults. Sir Henry was more lavish in his proposals, because he thought that John

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 188-189.

would cut down any proposal which he made; and John was more hard and stingy, upon parallel reasoning. We both agreed that John had begun to adopt Sir Henry's views in many things from the very moment that Sir Henry left the Punjaub, and that the crisis of 1857 had very much more softened and modified John's former principles."

But however beneficial to the state, such a position could not but be extremely painful to the brothers, who found themselves in conscience bound to oppose one another's views. Without exception, when a jaghir case, upon which they could not agree, was submitted to Lord Dalhousie, he decided in favour of John; and Henry chafed the more that the jaghirdars, knowing he was their friend, should be able to shake their heads and tell one another that the once-powerful Henry Lawrence had no longer any influence over the Lord Sahib. Had there been no expression of irritation they would have been more than human, and Mr. Montgomery humorously complained that his position was that of "a regular buffer between two high-pressure engines." In the altercation that arose the President occasionally showed himself irritable and querulous, and unwilling to admit the other point of view. The character of Sir Henry Lawrence was so lofty that any attempt to claim for him exemption from human weakness could only tend to belittle him. His temper was naturally hasty, and his temperament too sensitive; he was at this time ill in body and mind, and Dalhousie's policy of annexation being obnoxious, the work was less congenial to him than to his brother. That the dissensions should be hidden from the public gaze was the aim of both. To present a united front was, in the first place, politic, and the strife was sufficiently disagreeable to men of their character without the odious reflection that their wrangles were being publicly discussed and exaggerated. From Montgomery they could not be

concealed, and, as their colleague possessed the esteem and affection of both—and of all who knew him—each brother attempted to bring the other to reason by convincing the third member of the Board of the justice of his own views and by asking his intervention.

The President complained that his brother paid too little regard to his opinion, sometimes indeed acting in opposition for no apparent reason; to which John replied that he had frequently given way against his better judgment, and found concession vain; that his brother's ill-health and consequent absence from Lahore had thrown the bulk of the work upon his shoulders; and he, in his turn, complained that, on occasion, after he had closely studied all the bearings of some problem, and had, after much thought and consultation, formed his opinion and his plans, the absent President, judging on general principles and with only a superficial knowledge of the specific case, would oppose and delay.

Montgomery could do no more than offer good advice. "Hereafter," said he, "when the daily strife of conflicting opinions is at an end, when we shall all have run our courses, how wretched will appear all the bickerings and heart-burnings that occupied so much of our time. Let us all while we are spared, do our best, and be able to say from our hearts at the end, that we are unprofitable servants."¹

And though this appeal did not bring the strife to an end, who can say that it failed to sink into the hearts of both and incline them to a greater degree of forbearance? That each did feel sympathy with the other's obvious grief was abundantly shown in their letters of this period; and Henry Lawrence strove to copy his Divine Master more closely, and prayed for help to overcome those faults which, he knew, beset him.

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 188.

“O Lord, give me grace and strength to do Thy will, to begin the day and end it with prayer and searching of my own heart, with reading of Thy word. Make me to understand it, to understand Thee, to bring home to my heart . . . my entire need of a Saviour, of my utter inability to do aught that is right in my own strength: make me humble, reasonable, contented, thankful, just, and considerate. Restrain my tongue and my thoughts; may I act as if ever in Thy sight, as if I may die this day. May I not fear man or man's opinions, but remember that Thou knowest my motives and my thoughts, and that Thou wilt be my judge. It is not in me to be regular: let me be so as much as I can. Let me do to-day's work to-day, not postponing, clear up and finish daily. So living in humility, thankfulness, contentment.”¹

John Lawrence had foreseen that the sharing of power and responsibility equally by two conscientious men of convictions fundamentally opposed would lead to a situation the more intolerable in that they loved one another. Before they had sat together at the Board for twelve months he had placed the difficulty before Lord Dalhousie, and had asked to be transferred elsewhere, recognising his brother's superior claim to the Punjab. A few extracts from the letter² will speak for themselves. After stating that he would have preferred to remain in the Jalandar had his own wishes been consulted, he expressed his opinion that:

“If I know myself, I believe I should be happier and equally useful to the State if I thought and acted on my own bottom. I am not well fitted by nature to be one of a triumvirate. Right or wrong, I am in the habit of quickly making up my mind on most subjects, and feel little hesitation in undertaking the responsibility of carrying

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 218.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 331-332.

out my views. The views of my brother, a man far abler than I am, are, in many respects, opposed to mine. I can no more expect that, on organic changes, he will give way to me, than I can to him. He is my senior in age, and we have always been staunch friends. It pains me to be in a state of antagonism towards him. A better or more honourable man I don't know, or one more anxious to discharge his duty conscientiously; but, in matters of civil polity of the first importance, we differ greatly. . . . I feel myself now in a false position, and would be glad to extricate myself, if I can do it with honour. . . . I will simply add that, if it is necessary that I stay at Lahore, I will do so with cheerfulness, and fulfil my duties as long as health and strength may last."

But the Governor-General had no idea of permitting John Lawrence to leave the province. The brothers would doubtless find their duties disagreeable, but their sacrifice would be the making of the Punjab.

"In unsullied honesty and intrepid manliness," said Sir John Kaye, "the two Lawrences were the counterparts of each other. Both were equally without a stain."¹ For nearly four years each tried to bring his brother to reason, and by the end of that time they were farther apart than ever. Had they held conflicting opinions on matters affecting themselves solely, and calling for personal sacrifice, how ready would each have been to give way! But the more they discussed the *jaghirdar* question, the more pronounced became Henry's scorn for filthy lucre and the worse opinion had John of the good-for-nothing gentry. In December 1852, when the success of the Punjab administration was assured, the Hyderabad Residency fell vacant, and both offered to resign their places on the Board and apply for the post.

This time Lord Dalhousie did not hesitate. He believed

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 52.

that Sir Henry's work in the Punjab was done, that the special conditions which had made his personal influence and *ikbal* a necessity had passed away, that the Board might safely be abolished¹ and the province governed by one man, with the power of a Lieutenant-Governor and the new title of Chief Commissioner. And there was one man in India in whom he had implicit trust, and that man was John Lawrence. Two years before this opportunity was given him to get rid of Sir Henry, Lord Dalhousie had written to the President of the Board of Control:² "I shall not be sorry when he goes, because although he has many fine qualities, I think his brother John, take him all in all, is a better man, fitted in every way for that place."

He therefore wrote to inform Sir Henry that Hyderabad had already been disposed of—to Colonel Low, a "soldier-civilian," whose attitude towards native states and princes resembled that of Sir Henry himself. It is interesting to note that the soldier administrators—Low, Sleeman, Edwardes, Nicholson, Abbott, Becher, Reynell Taylor, Lake, Robert Napier, George and Henry Lawrence—seemed able to enter more fully into the modes of thought and understand better the prejudices of the natives than could the civilians. The Governor-General now proposed to appoint Sir Henry to Rajputana, the Residency vacated by Colonel Low.

He proceeded to offer an explanation of the reasons that led him to decide that the younger brother should remain in the Punjab.

¹ Within a few weeks of the appointment of the Punjab Board Lord Dalhousie wrote to the President of the Board of Control: "If Sir Henry Lawrence had in my judgment been as indisputably fit to administer alone the civil government as he was to direct the political and military arrangements of the Punjab, I never would have thrown the local government into the form of a Board."—Lee Warner, vol. i. p. 252.

² Lee Warner, vol. i. p. 254.

¹ “ It has for some time been the recorded opinion of the Supreme Government that, whenever an opportunity occurred for effecting a change, the administration of the Punjaub would best be conducted by a Chief Commissioner, having a Judicial and a Revenue Commissioner under him. But it was also the opinion of the Government that, whenever the change should be made, the Chief Commissioner ought to be an officer of the Civil Service.

“ You stand far too high, and have received too many assurances and too many proofs of the great estimation in which your ability, qualities, and services have been held by the successive Governments under which you have been employed, to render it necessary that I should bear testimony here to the value which has been set upon your labours and upon your service as the head of the Administration of the Punjaub by the Government over which I have had the honour to preside. We do not regard it as in any degree disparaging to you that we, nevertheless, do not consider it expedient to commit the sole executive charge of the administration of a kingdom to any other than to a thoroughly trained and experienced civil officer. . . . I presume your offer had no especial reference to Hyderabad. Rajpootana in your hands will have the same salary as Hyderabad, and a political jurisdiction such, I believe, as accords with your inclinations. The Agent marches all the cold weather, and in the hot weather is privileged to retire to Mount Aboo. These are considerations which render the appointment agreeable as well as important, though I do not for a moment pretend to compare its importance with the Punjaub. . . . I hope you will be satisfied by it that the Government has evinced every desire to treat you with the highest consideration. Although it is not to be expected that you can concur in the view the Government has taken regarding the Chief-Commissioner-

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 191-194.

ship, you will at least be convinced that neither I nor my colleagues had any desire of forcing our views into practical operation at the expense of your feelings, or to do anything which might discredit your public position.

"Before closing this letter, I must take the liberty of adding what is due in justice to you, that in all our correspondence and conversations regarding your differences with John Lawrence, I have always found you acting towards him with frankness and generosity.

"The subject of this letter is, of course, entirely confidential. I shall write to your brother to-day, and inform him that I have written to you, and nothing more will be said or done until I shall receive your reply."

So prompt an acceptance of his offer to resign was a bitter pill for Sir Henry to swallow. Admitting that two men of such opposing tendencies could not work well harnessed together, he could by no means acknowledge that if the Board should cease to exist he was not qualified to be supreme. The Punjab was his own particular country. He had been its head, real and nominal, ever since the Company had interfered in its internal affairs, and with all his humility and modesty he knew how predominating had been his influence in effecting the wonderful transition of "order out of chaos, law out of anarchy, peace out of war." "What the watchmaker is to the watch," said General Abbott in 1858,¹ "that was Sir Henry Lawrence to the Punjab. His assistants fashioned wheels, pivots, spring and balance; but it was his great mind which attributed to each his work, which laid down the dimensions of every circle, the power of every spring, the length of every lever, and which combined the whole into one of the greatest of triumphs of modern polity. His was the spirit which inspired every act of the local government, which touched the heart of all his subordinates with ardour to fill

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 154.

up each his own part in a system so honourable to the British name. All caught from him the sacred fire; his presence seemed all-pervading, for the interests of the meanest were dear to him as those of the most powerful; and goodness and greatness were so natural wherever he came that other fruits seemed strange and impossible."

Sir Henry replied, accepting the offer of Rajputana, and commented with some bitterness upon the implication that the "recorded opinion of the Supreme Government" was in effect that his presence at Lahore was "the only hindrance to the adoption of an improved administration of the Punjab. . . . For peace sake and the benefit of the public service, I was prepared to make way for J. L., and I have no wish to recall that offer. Our differences certainly hindered work, and therefore, while the Board existed, it was better that one of us should be withdrawn. That when a single head should be appointed, I was deemed unfit to be that head, was a mortifying discovery, and I could not but write as feeling the disappointment, though I hope I expressed myself with due respect. However if I was before ready to vacate the post here, there are now stronger reasons to request my removal." ¹

Though Sir Henry's wound never ceased to smart, there was no trace of bitterness in the subsequent relations of the brothers. The Governor-General's appointment required confirmation by the directors, and Mr. Merivale has published the draft of a letter addressed by Sir Henry to the head of the Board of Control, with the object of ensuring the appointment to the post of him whom he knew to be the best fitted.

"In many respects I look on my brother John as better adapted to this office than any other officer I know. My departure will cause considerable alarm in the Durbar; but in the native opinion the change would be the less if my

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 194.

brother took my place, especially as he has already acted for me, and will now be here again for two months, and is known to be on the most brotherly terms with me. Perhaps it may be unseemly in me saying so much for my brother, but I do so on public grounds."

The phrase in Lord Dalhousie's letter implying that he was not "a thoroughly trained and experienced civil officer" rankled in his mind, and in a long letter of justification to his friend Sir James Hogge, a director of the Company, he stated that: "I am quite ready to allow that my brother John is well qualified for the post he has got, but I do not know any other civilian in India who is. His special fitness, however, is *not* that he is a civilian, but that he would make a good soldier; and, with all deference to the Governor-General, I think he has gone twenty years too fast, and that already we have too many trained civilians and too much of the Regulations in the Punjaub; that what is then wanted is the very simplest form of law, or rather of equity, and that the proper men to carry it out are such as Edwardes, Nicholson, Taylor, Lake, Becher, and civilians of the same stamp—men who will not spare themselves, who will mix freely with the people, and will do prompt justice, in their shirt-sleeves, rather than profound laws, to the discontent of all honest men, as is done in Bengal, and even in the pattern Government of Agra. The expression a trained civilian puzzles me; the fact being that I have done as much civil work as my brother and twice as much as many civilians who are considered trained men. I, too, have held every sort of civil post during the last twenty-one years, and *have trained myself* by hard work and by putting my own shoulder to the wheel." ¹

Before leaving Lahore he addressed the following pathetic plea to his successor:—

"As this is my last day at Lahore, I venture to offer you

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 200.

a few words of advice, which I hope you will take in the spirit it is given in, and that you will believe that, if you preserve the peace of the country, and make the people high and low happy, I shall have no regrets that I vacated the field for you. It seems to me that you look on almost all questions affecting Jagheerdars and Mafeedars in a perfectly different light from all others; in fact, that you consider them as nuisances and as enemies. If anything like this be your feeling, how can you expect to do them justice, as between man and man? I am sure if you will put it to yourself in this light, you will be more disposed to take up questions affecting them in a kindly spirit. I think we are doubly bound to treat them kindly, *because they are down*, and because they and their hangers-on have still some influence as affecting the public peace and contentment. I would simply do to them as I would be done by. I by no means say much in favour of most of their characters, I merely advocate their cases on the above grounds. I think also, if you will coolly consider the Jullunder Jagheer question, you will agree that the original conquerors there, and their old families, have been treated with unusual harshness, whole bodies of them have been recently petitioning me for the same terms as we have given here. Surely this is scarcely justice. You have now an excellent opportunity to redeem an error, and to obtain for yourself popularity. I simply referred parties to Macleod, because I believed you would be offended with any other step I might take. I beg you will allow Mac. to report on *all* the old cases, say, of those of possession of above fifty years, and that you will act on his and the district officer's recommendation. I will not trouble you on other subjects, on most of them you are more at home than I am; I strongly recommend you to hold weekly Durbars—an hour or two thus spent will save much time, and cause much contentment.

“Wishing you health and all success, yours, affectionately.”¹

John Lawrence was by nature more reticent than his brother, and his emotions were under better control—not starved nor crushed, but kept in subjection. He rarely cared to reveal his inmost thoughts, and the workings and yearnings of his heart were not obtruded; and herein lay one of the secrets of his power. His reply seems largely dictated by calm reason rather than by emotion, but, underlying the words, those who knew the man might read and divine how the appeal must have touched him.

“My dear Henry,—I have received your kind note, and can only say in reply that I sincerely wish that you had been left in the Punjab to carry out your own views, and that I had got another berth. I must further say that where I have opposed your views I have done it from a thorough conviction, and not from factious or interested motives. I will give every man a fair hearing, and will endeavour to give every man his due. More than this no one should expect. . . . It is more than probable that you and I will never again meet; but I trust that all unkindly feeling between us may be forgotten.”²

Here were no platitudes to grate upon the too-sensitive nerves of the loser in the strife, but who can doubt that, as he wrote, he formed that resolve to regard with greater sympathy the other point of view, and to give greater weight to his brother's opinions, which, happily for India, marked his subsequent career.

The news flashed across the land of the Five Rivers and stupefaction succeeded to incredulity. Who could imagine the Punjab without its battered figure-head! And Sikhs in the *darwazas* of the Manjha;³ Jats and Mussulmans under

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 195-196.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 338.

³ The Manjha is the home of the Sikhs—the country around Lahore, the political capital, and Amritsar, the religious capital.

the pipal trees in the villages of the plains; Dogras in the valleys of the Eastern highlands; Afridis, Waziris, and Yusufzais along the wild Trans-Indus border; and men of Hazara in the northern hills, all would discuss the change as they smoked when the day's work was done, and wonder what it might portend. And wherever it was possible for the British officials to foregather, there was one topic of conversation. With imaginations fired by the brilliant ability, courage, upright character, devotion to duty, quick grasp of the most intricate problems, and equally quick decision, of him who, no longer the "Laird of Cockpen," was now styled "the Great Pro-Consul," the rising men of the three presidencies were mostly disciples of the Dalhousie school. In the Punjab alone predominated the sympathisers with the views held by Sir Henry Lawrence—in influence certainly, and probably in numbers.

Like their chief, to whom they gave their best work, the Dalhousie men were ambitious to see the line of red on the map of Asia pushed forward wherever, below the Himalayas, the Sulaimans, and the Hindu Kush, a fainter colour marked a native-governed state. This was no sordid ambition, no braggart desire for aggrandisement. Their zeal for the welfare of the dusky millions was sincere, and they felt keenly the abuses of the native regimes and believed amendment hopeless. Experience had taught them how great a boon to the natives is the rule of the Englishman; they had before their eyes the example of the Punjab and, as a contrast, its former dependency Kashmir; Sind and Rajputana lay side by side; and the wretchedness of Oudh under its debauchee's misrule grew daily more pronounced.

None could be more desirous of the people's welfare than were Lord Dalhousie and his enthusiasts, but, acknowledging this, the rival school maintained that they

had no right to deprive any state of its own form of government, even for its own undoubted good, so long as British supremacy was not menaced and treaties were not too flagrantly broken. To exercise supervision, to treat a state as a child and take in hand its affairs for a time, might be justifiable; to cut off all hope of reaching man's estate and thus, for the folly of the fathers, to penalise the children and deprive them of their heritage, should be a last resort when all other means had failed.

But of whatever school, the Punjabis received the announcement as a bolt from the blue, and grief was universal. Englishmen, Sikhs, and Mussulmans sorrowed over the loss of a dear friend, and more than one of the heroes of '57 felt that they could no longer work with the pride and enthusiasm that had hitherto sustained them and lifted their labours to so high a level, now that he, whose good opinion they valued most, whose approval had spurred them to ungrudging efforts, had gone from their midst.

One of the first to hear was the famous soldier-administrator, the regimental captain, who, at the age of thirty-four, was picked out by John Lawrence, over the heads of his seniors, to deal the Mutiny its most crushing blow. John Nicholson was in far Bannu, that "hell upon earth," which he was now "curbing to the fear of punishment." He hurriedly wrote back to ask if Sir Henry would take him also to Rajputana, as the Punjab would henceforward have little attraction for him, or for Reynell Taylor, or Lumsden of the Guides. "I certainly won't stay on the border in your absence," he wrote, and added his conviction that "poor little Abbott" would soon be driven out of the Punjab.

A second letter from the unwilling founder of the Nikalsain sect quickly followed to inform Sir Henry that he had received "a letter from your brother, in which he

said that he hoped to prove as staunch a friend to me as you had ever been. I cannot but feel obliged to him; but I know that, as a considerate and kind patron, you are not to be replaced. I would, indeed, gladly go with you, even on reduced allowances. I feel that I am little fit for regulation work, and I can never sacrifice common sense and justice, or the interests of a people and country, to red tape. A clever fellow like old Edwardes can manage both; but it is beyond me. It would do your heart good to hear the Sikhs in the posts along the border talk of you. Surely, in their gratitude and esteem 'you have your reward.'"¹

The "warden of the marches" stayed on the frontier, where to this day, nearly fifty years after his death, the turbulent Pathans still hear on stormy nights "the tramp of Nikalsain's war-horse."

In January 1853 Henry Lawrence and his wife left Lahore and never in the history of the East had any Englishman such a leave-taking. "Grief was depicted on every face," wrote Mr. Bosworth Smith. "Strong men, Herbert Edwardes conspicuous amongst them, might be seen weeping like little children . . . a long cavalcade of aged native chiefs followed him. . . . It was a long, living funeral procession from Lahore nearly to Amritsar," the holy city of the Sikhs, where the demonstrations of grief were renewed. There both Englishmen and natives had gathered in numbers, many chieftains having hastened from near and far, eager, as Mr. Raikes has said, for "a last word or even a look."

The gaunt and broken-down figure² was never more seen in the Punjab.

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 206.

² "His active and somewhat attenuated frame seemed a prison-house which had been gradually worn away by the fluttering of the soul within."—Sir Rd. Temple, *Men and Events of my Time in India*.

CHAPTER XIX

(1853-1856)

JOHN LAWRENCE RULES THE PUNJAB

John Supreme in the Punjab—"How would Henry have acted?"—
John Nicholson, Neville Chamberlain, Robert Napier, Donald
Macleod—Treaty with Afghanistan—Lord Dalhousie's Affec-
tion for John—Last Meeting between the Brothers.

As "Chief Commissioner of the Punjab," John Lawrence was now free to act on his own responsibility, subject to the approval of Lord Dalhousie, and of that he was assured. But if the elder brother was a broken-hearted man, the younger was not happy; no sense of elation filled his soul; there was no rejoicing as over a victory. His love for Henry was deep and lasting, and the reflection that he had been the reluctant cause of his brother's mortification left him sorrowing, but his determination to do his duty was as firm as ever.

Aware of the strong feeling in favour of his brother, in the hearts of the very men upon whose assistance he most depended, he feared there would be trouble with others besides Nicholson. A smaller man would have felt aggrieved and would have shown it; a weaker would have attempted to ingratiate himself by praise and favour; one endowed with his brusque honesty and stern self-reliance might have been tempted to force his refractory subordinates to acknowledge him as master.

None of these things did John Lawrence. He respected the loyalty of the subalterns to their old captain, and

liked them the better for it; and he proceeded to win them by tact and patient firmness, and by self-control. His manner changed somewhat, and he lost much of that apparent harshness which those who did not know him well were apt to misunderstand. No motive of policy brought about this change. His brother's farewell words had sunk deep, and the influence of religion, gaining a greater hold month by month, was mellowing the grand and rugged character.

It is more easy to be tolerant of another's views when supreme, when the opponent has no power to frustrate or impede, than when yoked to another, unable to act until he has been convinced. In argument the temptation is to score points in favour of our own views rather than to probe for the truth. Believing that our cause is the only right one, we look for, and attach undue importance to, every fact that seems to strengthen it. Afterwards, when the need for further disputation has disappeared, comes the reflection that, after all, there was much force in the other's arguments, and we look with less aversion upon the idea of a compromise which is something more than the famous "Brown compromise" of Harry East.

And so it was with John Lawrence. Now that he was no longer compelled either to combat or defer to his brother's opinions, he became more susceptible to that brother's influence. "He succeeded," said General Reynell Taylor, "to many of the graces of his lost brother;" and Mr. Bosworth Smith has recorded that, when confronted by a difficult problem, he would ask himself: "What would Henry have said? How would Henry have acted?"

There were still some sixty thousand tenure cases to be considered, and his recommendations upon these were more favourable than before to the jaghirdars. There is a certain irony in the reflection that Lord Dalhousie, in

disallowing some of these as too generous, should have "appealed from the John Lawrence of the present to the John Lawrence of former days."¹

There was little change in the policy of the Punjab. Roads, inundation canals, and other public works were extended; industry and education were encouraged; the survey was completed, and the revenue assessed according to the quality of the soil. The village community system was made use of, a community being assessed, and the *lambardars* of the village proportioning to each man his share. These headmen were also held generally responsible for the behaviour of their villages, and their authority was upheld.

Nothing in the Punjab was too small for the Chief Commissioner's consideration. He studied not only the men but their fields and crops and wells; he criticised the breeds of cattle and horses and praised or made suggestions; and he practised as well as preached his doctrine that work was the highest duty of man.

The province continued to progress. New men were brought in, of whom Richard Temple proved perhaps the greatest help to his chief. Montgomery was appointed Judicial Commissioner and Mr. Edmonstone the Revenue Commissioner, and John Lawrence supervised all their doings, instructing, encouraging, and remonstrating, with infinite tact. He never took to himself the credit for the labour of another, and would suffer gladly the idiosyncrasies of any who were really zealous for the people and the province. Laziness or indifference to the public weal he would not countenance.

Henry's training—indispensable at first when chaos reigned, when trust in the friendship and integrity of the English was all-important—showed its defects, now that the time had come for a more scientific regime. "A

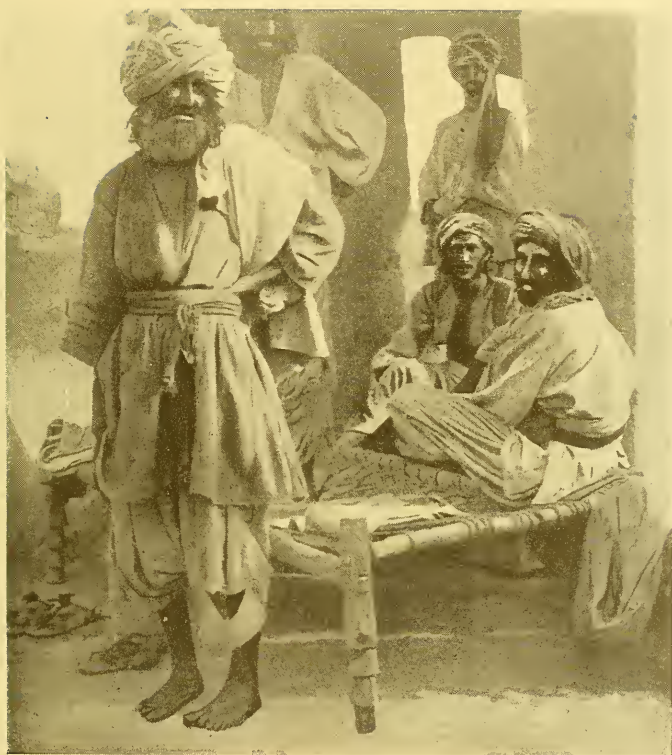
¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 343.

clever fellow like old Edwardes can manage both," Nicholson had said; but he, Robert Napier, and others of the old Punjab school could with difficulty be induced to consult their chief before taking some momentous step. They were trained to act on their own responsibility, and John Lawrence's racy and good-humoured pleading for occasional reports of their proceedings and accounts of their expenditure was treated with scant consideration. They were too busy making history to write it.

Their contempt for red tape carried them too far. Their chief was not the man to prefer a lengthy essay on the condition of a district to wholesome action calculated to improve that same condition. But he had to take a view broader and deeper than theirs, and much as he admired his spirited team, "Coachman John" rightly insisted on a firm grip of the reins.

The waywardness of his best officers greatly increased the work and anxiety of the Chief Commissioner. The principal offender was the young captain before whom the border trembled. That a sect was formed in honour of Nicholson is well known, and the more he tried to thrash adoration out of the hearts of his worshippers the louder swelled the chants in his praise. Even the Mussulmans regarded him as a type of the saint-heroes of their legends, and John Nicholson, unarmed, could make an assemblage of cut-throats shake in their shoes as effectively as could the bayonets of a regiment.

Nicholson was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable men of all time, defying comparison and classification. "Of what class is John Nicholson the type?" wrote Edwardes, for Mr. Raikes' *Notes on the Revolt of the North-West Provinces*. "Of none; for truly he stands alone. But he belongs essentially to the school of Henry Lawrence. I only knocked down the walls of the Bannu forts, John



MAHZUD WAZIRIS FROM THE BANNU DISTRICT.

Nicholson has since reduced the *people* (the most ignorant, depraved, and bloodthirsty in the Punjab) to such a state of good order and respect for the laws that, in the last year of his charge, not only was there no murder, burglary, or highway robbery, but not an *attempt* at any of those crimes."¹

To one man only would he bend the knee—to Henry Lawrence. His "boundless devotion to Henry made him stiff and unfriendly to John," said Daly, and the chief's character stands out sound and wholesome in his dealings with this difficult subaltern. Firm he was, but very patient, ever ready to put the best construction on Nicholson's acts, and resolved to retain him where he was "a tower of strength" rather than allow his place to be taken by one more docile but less efficient.

On one occasion Nicholson manifested a strong inclination to lead in person a punitive expedition into the hills, and John Lawrence gently restrained him, because he had not obtained the sanction of the brigadier in charge of the troops. Nicholson's reply was short and unsatisfactory, and the Chief Commissioner wrote again.

"I shall be very glad if you punish the Sheoranis, but get Hodgson [the brigadier] to agree in your measures. . . . Pray report officially all incursions. I shall get into trouble if you don't. The Governor-General insists on knowing all that goes on, and not unreasonably; but I can't tell him this if I don't hear details."²

Was Nicholson recalling the request for official reports when he sent this grim note to his chief? "Sir,—I have

¹ "A young officer recently died in Bannu, at whose funeral his friends were astonished to see large numbers of natives. They, however, had heard that he was a nephew of the great Nicholson, and they had come to do honour to that family."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, November, 1904, *Some Punjab Frontier Recollections*, by Colonel Moncrieff.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 348-349.

the honour to inform you that I have just shot a man who came to kill me.”¹

Until the outbreak of the Mutiny Nicholson remained a rebel against the authority of John Lawrence, though he admitted to Sir Henry that “John has been very forbearing, and I am sure puts up with much from me on your account.” The following extracts from his correspondence shows how differently he bore himself towards the elder brother.

“My dear Nicholson,” Sir Henry had written in 1849 after an outburst of righteous indignation, “let me advise you, as a friend, to curb your temper, and bear and forbear with natives and Europeans, and you will be as distinguished as a Civilian as you are as a Soldier. Don’t think it necessary to say all you think to every one. The world would be one mass of tumult if we all gave *candid* opinions of each other. I admire your sincerity as much as any man can do, but say thus much as a general warning. Don’t think I allude to any specific act; on the contrary, from what I saw in camp, I think you have done much toward conquering yourself; and I hope to see the conquest completed.”

“My dear Colonel,” Nicholson replied. “*Very many* thanks for yours of the 7th, and the friendly advice which it contains. I am not ignorant of the faults of my temper,

¹ Probably Lord Lawrence never knew that about this period he himself was in danger of assassination. While on tour his thoroughness and determination to master every problem greatly increased the labours of those whose work he was inspecting. When at Murdan the men of the Guides did not approve of the way in which he monopolised the time of their popular commandant, and Lumsden’s Afridi orderly had a proposal to make. “Since the great Lawrence came,” said he, “you have been worried and distressed; many have observed this, and that he is always looking at papers, asking questions, and overhauling your accounts. Has he said anything to pain you? Is he interfering with you? He starts for Peshawur to-morrow morning; there is no reason why he should reach it.”—*Lumsden of the Guides*, p. 108.

and you are right in supposing that I do endeavour to overcome them—I hope with increasing success. . . . A knowledge of the disease is said to be half the cure, and I trust the remaining half will not be long before it is effected.”¹

Nicholson's bluntness soon plunged him into a controversy with that fine soldier and gentleman, Neville Chamberlain, who had succeeded Hodgson as brigadier in his district. The rôle of peacemaker fell, of course, to the Chief Commissioner, who, throughout the lengthy correspondence which ensued, showed himself patient, wise, and just. The quarrel arose out of a Waziri raid in which Nicholson's friend, Zeman Khan, had been slain. The Commissioner of Bannu complained strongly to his chief of the incapacity of Chamberlain's troops, which, so he maintained, ought to have been able to prevent the outrage, and he mentioned four recent occasions on which raiders had not been molested. He did not mince matters, and Chamberlain, highly incensed, demanded an apology.

Lawrence wrote several times to each to explain the other's point of view, and at the same time to palliate those expressions calculated to give offence. He pleaded earnestly and tactfully that each should be willing to overlook much from the other as the reputations of both were too firm to be easily shaken.

He told Chamberlain how Nicholson, whose ambition had been to have the command of the Frontier Force, had withdrawn his application as soon as he heard that it was the post that Chamberlain also desired, saying, “That he would never think of being a candidate while you were available, as he believed you were much more fitted for the post than himself,” and he also begged Nicholson to write to express his regret for his strictures upon Chamberlain's force; but both were implacable.

¹ Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. ii. p. 442.

"I have got a long letter (official) from Chamberlain," he then wrote to Nicholson, "who asks for replies, twenty in number, in respect of the raids you reported. If anything will shut your mouth, it will be these queries, for I often find it difficult to get an answer to *one*. However if you can answer them all, and promptly, when replying to this letter, I shall be glad if you will express your regret that Chamberlain has been annoyed, and say you had no intention to reflect on the force. He is much too sensitive in such matters. Still, he is a fine fellow, and will do the force much good. Moreover, I should be much grieved if he went away in disgust, whether the cause was real or imaginary."¹

To Edwardes on the same subject—

"I return Nicholson's letter. I have got an official letter from Chamberlain, putting twenty queries on each of the four raids to Nicholson! Now, if anything will bring 'Nick' to his senses it will be these queries. He will polish off a tribe in the most difficult fortress, or ride the border like 'belted Will' of former days; but one query in writing is often a stumper for a month or two. The 'pen-and-ink work,' as he calls it, 'does not suit him.'"

The strained relations continued for some months, Chamberlain being the first to hold out his hand; and he it was who watched by the couch of his friend and comrade two years later when the hero of Delhi lay dying.

Once more had John Lawrence to act as peacemaker, this time between Edwardes and his subordinate, Captain Coke—he who raised the 1st Punjab Infantry, "Coke's Afridis," who rendered such fine service during the Mutiny. Napier, the engineer, likewise took the bit between his teeth and was inclined to bolt. As a disciple of Henry Lawrence he was unwilling to admit the argument of expense and the Head of the Punjab was brought to book

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 408.

by the Board of Directors for the sins of his subordinate—for the expenditure on public works that had been incurred without his authority and in spite of his protests.

“ . . . He is all for pushing on works or originating new ones,” Lawrence wrote to the Governor-General. “ But he dislikes details and accounts of all kinds, and cannot find it in his heart to censure any one under him. . . . He has, also, no proper idea of economy. As he naïvely observed last night, he had no idea that he could go on too fast, but supposed that Government might believe that enough was not being done, sufficient money not being spent. Your Lordship may depend on my doing all I can to get things placed on a proper footing; and, if possible, I will do this without any explosion with Napier, for whom I have a great regard. He has the most decided aversion to estimates of all kinds, and considers that they are nothing but ‘ snares to entrap the Engineers.’ ”¹

But if the disciple had the weakness of his master he also shared his strength, for whatsoever he undertook that he did well; and his chief was not blind to his merits. “ The work he [Napier] has done since annexation is enormous, and would have killed many men.” And in 1867, when it fell to the lot of John Lawrence to recommend a general to command the army in Abyssinia, he showed that Napier’s thoroughness had not been forgotten. “ If you want the thing thoroughly well done,” said he, “ go to Napier.”

The idiosyncrasies of Donald Macleod, John Lawrence’s dearest friend, placed an additional burden on the already over-weighted shoulders of the Chief Commissioner. Admitting that “ morally and intellectually he has no superior in the Punjab, perhaps no equal,” he was obliged to find fault with Macleod’s tendency to run into arrears that had to be cleared away periodically by the chief himself.

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 413.

“He is too fond of polishing,” Lawrence wrote to Edwardes, “and his execution is not equal to his designs. He wastes much time on unimportant matters. He spends as much time on a petty case as on an important one. His Commissionership has not fair and honest work for a man of ability and knowledge for six hours a day. I know it, for I was Commissioner there for three years when it had to be licked into shape. It is useless saying that we must choose between quality and quantity. We must have both, or the result is a failure. There are certain things to be done in an official berth, and a certain time to do them in. A good and efficient administrator will so distribute his time as to do them all. He will economise when it can be done safely, and throw in his power when it is wanted. Edmonstone has not the intellect of Donald; he has not his knowledge of the customs and habits of the people; but by order and economy of time, joined to an iron constitution, he did treble the work that Donald does; and on the whole, he did it better. He would not do a given case so well, perhaps, but he would do a hundred, while the other would do ten, and he would do them rightly. Donald spends half the day writing elegant demi-official *chits*. I spin off a dozen in a day, and they don’t take an hour. They may want the elegant turn he gives to his, but they are to the point and do all that is necessary. Edmonstone, Raikes, and Barnes have more settlements than Macleod. The revenues of the country cannot afford more men. We must either reduce the salaries, and thus effect a saving to pay for more men, or we must get more work out of our Donalds. An assistant is of little or no use to a really efficient Commissioner. The mere drudgery of the office should be done by the head clerk, who gets the pay of an educated man. No practical man would have such a man as ——— for his head clerk for a month. Donald *moans*, but retains him. At this moment, he has

not sent up any report of his administration for the past three years, and has several hundred appeals standing over, some as long as four years. He has men under *trial* in jail for upwards of a year. ‘*Bis dat qui cito dat*’ is a good motto in administration. Donald is not fit for a new country; he has, with all his virtues, radical defects. I see this, who love the man; what more can I say?”¹

With Mr. Barnes—commended in the letter last quoted—he had to remonstrate because of an excess of the virtue that Mr. Macleod lacked. “Ah, Barnes!” said the chief. “you are a very clever fellow; you can get through in half an hour what it would take most of us an hour to do equally well; and if only you would not insist on getting through in a quarter of an hour instead of half an hour, you would do it excellently.”²

In the autumn of 1853 Colonel Mackeson, the Commissioner of Peshawar, less fortunate than Nicholson, was murdered by a fanatic. After Lahore, Peshawar was the most important post in the Punjab. As in Bannu, the Pathans there were bred as robbers and murderers, and the man to control them must possess uncommon qualifications. Lord Dalhousie had thoughts of appointing Sir James Outram, but Lawrence urged strongly the surpassing claims of Herbert Edwardes whose experience of the people was greater. He pointed out that Edwardes, being younger than himself and already his subordinate and personal friend, would be prepared to carry out his policy; whereas Outram, “a fine soldier and a noble fellow,” was Lawrence’s senior in age, and had filled high positions, and would therefore find greater difficulty in subordinating his own views. Lord Dalhousie gave way.

During the last months of 1853 Lawrence visited the frontier and personally inspected the work of his outpost

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 355-356.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 379.

officers,¹ and here the soldier-instinct peeped out. The Afridis of Kohat had been taught a lesson, but their Bori cousins still lacked the blessings of experience. They began to raid the country-side in the neighbourhood of Peshawar, murdering and carrying off people and cattle as in the brave days of old. The Chief Commissioner went to Peshawar and found the Afridis insolent and defiant, for the Bori hills were considered impregnable and the valley had not been entered by an enemy for centuries. However he collected a force of Europeans, Guides, and Gurkhas and soundly thrashed the tribesmen, and in his old age Lord Lawrence, "with boyish glee and a visible sparkle in his almost sightless grey eyes,"² would often speak of this day when he threw off the civilian and rejoiced to be under fire.

He had secured the right man in the right place at Peshawar, but Edwardes did not content himself with carrying out the instructions of his chief. His mind was essentially initiative, and before he had been many months at the mouth of the Khyber he began to evolve a noteworthy scheme to safeguard the peace of the border; no less than the binding to England by treaty of that very Dost Mohammed of Kabul, whose advances had once been so ignominiously—and so disastrously—rejected, who had been in turn dethroned and enthroned, and who had made common cause with his Sikh enemies in 1849. In due course, Edwardes submitted his plan to Lawrence and to Lord Dalhousie, the latter approving, the former being sceptical. What, said Lawrence, was the use of a treaty

¹ He was accompanied by his wife and the one child who had not been sent to England. A few years before this Edwardes and Nicholson, returning home on furlough, had taken charge of the Lawrence girls and had made the voyage a delightful holiday for the youngsters. And now Nicholson again won the heart of the mother by his kindness to the child while they remained in his district.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 367.

with an Afghan, who would keep his word just as long as suited his own interests, and not a moment longer? To which Edwardes replied that the amir might be made to see that his interests were bound up with those of England. But John Lawrence was ever inclined to underestimate the power of native monarchs and chieftains for good or evil. Confident in Britain's strength he preferred to stand alone, independent of friends, defying enemies to do their worst. Moreover, he held that overtures to the amir would be regarded as a sign of weakness, and the idea that England was so hard pressed as to make a bid for an Afghan alliance against Russia would have a bad effect throughout Asia. Edwardes met the argument with the assertion that Dost Mohammed was ready to make the overtures and simply desired encouragement; he, not England, would be the suppliant.

Edwardes prevailed. The heir-apparent of Kabul was sent to Peshawar to meet John Lawrence and draw up the treaty. Lawrence would have preferred that the Commissioner of Peshawar should have this honour and responsibility, but the amir had stipulated for *Jan Larens*, so Edwardes, always enthusiastically loyal, elected to stand aside for his chief. In England the treaty was received with acclamation, the credit being universally accorded to John Lawrence, who disclaimed it for two good reasons. Honest to the core he wished Edwardes to have whatever praise might be due; and, secondly, he had little faith in the efficacy of the treaty, and hardly hoped that any good would accrue therefrom.

But Edwardes seems to have been right. Whether influenced by good faith or self-interest Dost Mohammed stood loyal and kept his mountaineers in hand even when, in '57, Peshawar his beloved, and the whole Trans-Indus border, were well within his grasp.

The account of the relations of John Lawrence with his

subordinates could not be more fittingly concluded than with these words of Sir John Kaye: "Our English officers for the most part lived pure lives in that heathen land; and private immorality under the administration of John Lawrence grew into a grave public offence."¹

Nature's claim for relaxation was month by month becoming more insistent, and Lawrence could not continue to ignore the demand. Reluctantly he made the admission that even his iron constitution and stubborn will were not superior to the laws that govern life.

"My work here is almost too much for me," he at length admitted. "Night and day I am hard at the mill. No old bullock in a drought is harder worked at a well irrigating the fields than I am."² To Henry he wrote at a later period: "The work here has vastly increased since you left. I am often fairly bewildered with it, though I work at the desk steadily from the minute I come in before breakfast—with an interval of ten minutes for breakfast . . . until I can no longer see. I never take a holiday or knock off even for an hour."

At an early date he had been compelled to implore that letters might not be crossed, as he was "almost blind with reading manuscript," and in 1855 he expressed the fear that blindness would soon be his portion. In the summer of this year he was dangerously ill with scarlet fever, and Lord Dalhousie, adopting strong measures, practically forbade him to leave the hills during the hot weather. "Never mind the Punjab Report," said he, "or any other report, but coddle yourself, turn idler, and get yourself up again."³

The masterful Governor-General had succumbed to the

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. pp. 64-65.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 444, 461.

³ *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 380.

attraction of the strong, silent man, and the relations between him and his chief lieutenant were now of a very pleasant nature. Lawrence had reported an interview with a highland chieftain who had never before seen a European, and the Viceroy playfully commended Lawrence's diplomacy in showing himself "as the first specimen of the conquering race. I have no doubt he will be as desirous to retain a recollection of you as I am, and as I have lately taken the liberty of showing. For I have to apologise to you for getting a daguerreotype taken from the portrait of you which Mr. C. Saunders brought down."¹

When Dalhousie's term of office was about to expire he expressed in unmistakable language his appreciation of the work done by John Lawrence, and offered to ask for either a baronetcy or a K.C.B. The Chief Commissioner decided in favour of the latter on the grounds that he was too poor for a baronetcy, and Dalhousie applauded the decision. In his letter of thanks Lawrence expressed his sense of a personal loss.

"I am glad to hear your lordship thinks we shall like Lord Canning, and I hope he will be satisfied with us. . . . A stimulus has been given to the general administration of India, and a general vigour infused into all departments, which, if only carried on, must wipe out the reproach under which the Government formerly laboured.

"To myself, personally, the change will be great. I can hardly expect to have so kind, so considerate, and so friendly a master. As one grows in years, one feels almost a disinclination to form new relations, even on the public account. . . . To your lordship the return to your own country will probably be a subject of unmixed pleasure, but to the friends you leave behind, among whom I am one of the sincerest, it cannot fail to be a cause of real regret."²

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 369. ² *Ibid.* vol. i. pp. 423, 427, 432.

On February 17, 1856, he repaired to Calcutta to see the last of his chief. "My dear old Boy," ran the note that greeted his arrival, "I have just received your letter, and as I shall be in Calcutta to-morrow evening for good, I will not give you the trouble of coming out here, but will see you, and with *sincere* pleasure, on Tuesday forenoon. As for my health, Jan La'rin, I am a cripple in every sense."

The affectionate and pathetic tone of these last letters of the little autocrat to the one brother is in marked contrast with that of the earlier letters which so estranged the other. The "great Pro-Consul" had sacrificed health and even life to a sense of duty. Well aware of the penalty, he had stayed in India beyond his time because his work was incomplete. On March 6 he sailed for England, returning home to die.

From on board ship he wrote again:

MY DEAR LAWRENCE,—The home news at Ceylon showed me your name in the *Gazette* as K.C.B. at last. You would take for granted my joy in this recognition of your merits and services. But I must give you joy nevertheless in words, and I do it from my heart. No man ever won the honour better, and of all your relatives and friends, not one has greater gratification in seeing honour done to you than I have. Pray offer my warmest congratulations and my kindest wishes to Lady Lawrence.

I was very miserable in parting from you all upon the ghaut that day. Of all I leave behind me, no man's friendship is more valued by me, no man's services are so highly estimated by me, as yours. God bless you, my dear John; write to me as you promised, and believe me now and always,—Your sincere friend,

DALHOUSIE.

The last meeting between Henry and John took place during this visit to Calcutta. For three days they were united, comrades once more, the old dispute buried and the heart-burnings forgotten.

CHAPTER XX

(1853-1856)

HENRY LAWRENCE AND THE RAJPUTS

Rajput Degeneracy—Gaol Reform—Suttee checked—Death of Lady Lawrence—Absorption of Native States—Annexation of Oudh.

THE Native States of Rajputana, eighteen in number, comprise a territory larger than the Punjab but more sparsely populated, the inhabitants—mainly of Rajput, Jat, and aboriginal descent—not exceeding twelve millions. The true Rajputs are the descendants of the Aryan conquerors of Hindustan and are therefore of the same branch of the human family as the English. The Aryans of India, known as Brahmans and Rajputs (priests and warriors), number roughly some sixteen millions, the great majority of the one hundred and thirty millions of natives known as Hindus—as distinguished from Mohammedans and aborigines—being of mixed Aryan and non-Aryan descent. Though the Rajputs suffered greatly at the hands of the Moslem hordes they were never completely overwhelmed. Moving westwards from Delhi, as the invaders seized upon the more delectable lands, many of their princes settled in, and gave a name to, *Rajasthan*, now known as Rajputana. There were founded the eighteen sovereign states, which, early in the eighteenth century, became willing feudatories to the dominant English. The true Rajputs are perhaps the proudest race in the world, and can boast of genealogical trees beside which

those of the proudest nobility of Britain, and even the more ancient families of Rome and Vienna, seem but of mushroom growth.

The "sons of the sun and moon" are, however, degenerate descendants of the heroes of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, and the *Pax Britannica* has not proved an unmixed blessing to the Rajput nobles. The path of military glory having been closed to them, they are no longer cast in the heroic mould of their forefathers, and "the names of Jeimul and Putta" are in danger of oblivion. There is no further need for the Rajput chivalry to die for their ideals of honour, for the women of Chitor to perish by thousands in the flames in order to escape dishonour, nor for their daughters to prefer exile in the wilderness rather than disgrace their blood by marriage with a Mohammedan, even though he be the most magnificent prince of the earth. Too proud to enlist in the Company's regiments and rub shoulders with persons of low degree, prevented by their watchful guardians from making war among themselves, the Rajputs of Rajputana have found no worthy occupation as a substitute for the call to arms. A slothful peace had little to offer them save opium and vice, and their sterner virtues have been gradually lost. No longer called upon to sacrifice themselves upon the altar of patriotism, the Rajputs were living the life of a sheltered race. The swords and spears with which they had been wont to guard their honour were now mere ornaments, and neither fulfilled their original purpose nor were likely to be turned into ploughshares or pruning-hooks.

Sir Henry Lawrence's position in Rajputana offered far less scope for his zeal in well-doing, and gave him considerably less authority, than he had enjoyed since the departure from Khatmandu. The Rajput principalities are jealous of interference and very jealous of one another.

The Resident's duties were to keep the peace, to control the external affairs of the states, to effect all possible improvements in the internal administration by advice and moral suasion, without undue interference of a nature to excite resentment, and, by example, to set a higher tone.

He paid flying visits to the chief towns of the various states, taking the measure of the Rajput princes and of his subordinates, the political agents. He entered the gaols and finding them, as he had expected, unfit for human habitation, he prevailed upon the rajas to provide better quarters. In a letter to Kaye he told how he had issued a circular to the princes, remarking:—

“That in different gaols I had seen strange sights that must, if known to beneficent rulers, revolt their feelings, etc., etc. I therefore suggested that all princes who kept gaols should give orders somewhat to the following effect: Classification, so as to keep men and women apart; also great offenders from minor ones; tried prisoners from untried; ventilation; places to wash, etc., etc. Well, in the course of two or three months I got favourable answers from almost all; and heard that in several places, including Jypur [the most troublesome state], they proposed to build new gaols. At Udaipur, my brother (George) told me that they released two hundred prisoners on receipt of my circular, and certainly they kept none that ought to have been released; for when I went to Udaipur last February, I found not a man in gaol but murderers, every individual of whom acknowledged to me his offence as I walked round and questioned them. The Durbars do not like these visits; but they are worth paying at all risks, for a few questions to every tenth or twentieth prisoner gives opportunities to innocent persons to come forward and petition. No officer appears ever before to have been in one of these dens.”¹

¹ *Lives of Indian Officers*, pp. 312-313.

He next turned his attention to suttee, a custom more honoured in Rajputana than elsewhere, and succeeded in diminishing the practice, checking it effectually in more than one state. For four years he lived among the Rajputs doing good, stimulating with his approbation such of the princes as would take even the slightest interest in their subjects' welfare, overawing those who tried to stem the tide of progress. Encouragement was scant; disappointments were many. Barbarous as was the Nepal court, treacherous and pitiless as had been the Lahore durbar, there was more hope for the upstart Gurkhas and Sikhs than for these Rajput aristocrats; yet at the close of his sojourn at Ajmere there was little active discontent in Rajputana—in marked contrast with its apprehensive state when he entered upon his duties there. Five of the principalities were then under his direct management, two of the rajas being children and three unfit to govern.

The Resident was privileged to retire for the hot season to Mount Abu, a health resort in the south of Rajputana, afterwards selected as the situation for one of the Lawrence Asylums. The mountain air suited him and he gained strength, but his wife's health had suffered too much from the climate of Lahore for the change to do more than prolong her life for a few months, and on January 15, 1854, Honoria Lawrence died. To her husband the blow was tempered by the assurance of a reunion not long to be delayed, an assurance largely due to the saintly influence of her who had passed away. At the bedside he sought relief by writing to his sons in England a tribute to the memory of their mother: ". . . So I went and took my last look of her dear sweet face, and prayed for the last time by her side—prayed that what I had neglected to do during her life I might now do after her death, prayed that her pure spirit might be around you and me, to guide us to good and shield us from evil. . . . Again, I say, my boys,

remember with love, and show your love by your acts: few boys ever had such a mother.”¹

Her friendship had been a precious gift, to whose inspiration to true unselfish action India owed no slight debt. As Lady Lawrence lay dying, Nicholson received the following letter from Sir Henry:

MY DEAR NICHOLSON,—Your long and kind letter of May will, I hope, some day be answered; but I write by my wife's bedside to give you a message she has just sent you. “Tell him I love him dearly as if he were my son. I know that he is noble and pure to his fellow-men; that he thinks not of himself; but tell him he is a sinner; that he will one day be as weak and as near death as I am. Ask him to read but a few verses of the Bible daily. . . .” I have just told her I had written to you as she had bidden me . . . she replied, “May God bless what you have said to him! I love him very much. I often think of all those fine young fellows in the Punjab, and what our example ought to have been to them, and how much we have neglected them.” My dear Nicholson, these may or may not be dying words; but she is very, very ill, and has been so for six weeks. . . . Daily and nightly she talks of you and others as of her sons and brothers. Her advice and example to you all has ever been good. Would that mine had been equally so. We have been cast on a pleasant land here, and are thankful for what God has done in spite of ourselves. Humanly speaking, she could not be alive now had we not left Lahore.²

Though Henry Lawrence, in the simple words of his epitaph, “tried to do his duty” with the same singleness of aim and undiminished courage, the light had gone out of his life. The sun broke through occasionally, but, while he lived, the clouds were nevermore to lift.

The feeling of unrest among the semi-independent kingdoms of India was spreading apace. The annexation of the Punjab had been understood by them as a just and natural consequence of aggression, but it was now becoming more and more evident that no native state was regarded with a very friendly eye by the Governor-General. Mis-

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 249.

² *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. ii. p. 449.

rule and unbridled licence were undoubtedly the reason of, not the excuse for, Lord Dalhousie's frank resolve "to take advantage of every just opportunity for acquiring territory, for adding to the revenues of the Public Treasury, and for extending the uniform application of our system of Government to those whose best interests we sincerely believe will be promoted thereby."

Lord Dalhousie's Indian experience was as yet inconsiderable when the Mahratta Raja of Sattara died without heir, an event all too common in Hindu states. As Brahman doctrine refuses hope of future bliss to him whose funeral rites have not been performed by a son, the custom of adoption prevailed, the offices of an adopted son being equally efficacious. "Politically," said Sir John Kaye,¹ "the right of adoption is as dear to the heart of a nation as it is personally to the individual it affects," and the Mogul emperors had recognised this right of their Hindu tributaries. As in England reluctance to anticipate death by making a will is so generally manifested, so in superstitious Hindustan the adoption is frequently postponed until too late. In such cases Mahratta custom recognises the right of a widow to adopt on behalf of a deceased husband, in the hope that his known intentions will thereby be carried out. But the Company limited the right of a widow to those cases in which she had been formally empowered to adopt by her husband, and in spite of a strong protest from Sir George Clerk, Henry Lawrence's former chief, now Governor of Bombay, the Mahrattas of Sattara were no longer ruled by one of their own blood.

"The Government," wrote Lord Dalhousie, "is bound in duty, as well as policy, to act on every such occasion with the purest integrity, and in the most scrupulous observance of good faith. Where even a shadow of doubt

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 70.

can be shown, the claim should at once be abandoned. But where the right to territory by lapse is clear, the Government is bound to take that which is justly and legally its due, and to extend to that territory the benefits of our sovereignty."

During Lord Dalhousie's term of office other two Mahratta states, Nagpore and Jhansi, were resumed. If "the shadow of doubt" was not lacking in the Sattara case, that of Nagpore was more easily justified, for there was no agreement with regard to an adopted son. General Low, now a member of the Council, urged his government, however, to defer to native sentiment and cited the bad effect upon Hindu opinion of the Sattara lapse, but Lord Dalhousie decided upon absorption, recording that he could not "admit that a kind and generous sentiment should outweigh a just and prudent policy."

The Jhansi rajaship was a recent creation of the Company, and on the death of the childless sovereign the Governor-General maintained his right to resume the territory. In 1857 the rani, afterwards distinguished as one of the few really able leaders of the rebellion, exacted a terrible price for the disregard of her privilege.

The three principalities of Sattara, Nagpore, and Jhansi were Mahratta *parvenus*, lands once forfeit to the British, governments practically created by the Company's will, and Lord Dalhousie maintained with some justice that though the ruler of such a state had the right to adopt an heir to his property, he had no power to regulate the succession to the throne. On the other hand the practice with regard to successions had been capricious, "every conceivable variety of course had been pursued," the terms of treaties had been ambiguous, and there was much excuse for the expectation of the tributary states that the right of adoption, according to their custom, would be allowed.

A very different case was that of Karauli in Rajputana, a dynasty existing long before the first Englishman had set foot in Hindustan. Application was made, on the death of the raja, for the recognition of a youth, Bharat Pal by name, as the adopted heir, and Lord Dalhousie, though at first in favour of annexation, hesitated to efface the historic house, and referred the question to the Home Government. The decision went in favour of Bharat Pal's claim, but in the meanwhile Sir Henry Lawrence came forward to oppose both Governor-General and Home Government. The appointment of Bharat Pal was unpopular, said he, the late raja, who had adopted him, having been a mere boy, and by Rajput custom in such cases the nobles had the controlling voice and they were unanimously in favour of Madan Pal who was older, better fitted to rule, and nearer of kin. He therefore championed the claims of Madan Pal. Recognising the force of Lawrence's arguments, Lord Dalhousie adopted his views; the State of Karauli was saved to do good service during the Mutiny, and the Rajput princes breathed more freely.

Unhappily much mischief had been caused by the delay. Every native court was aware that an ancient dynasty had been threatened with extinction and that the Governor-General had contemplated the annexation of Rajput territory, and a feeling of uneasiness prevailed. No kingdom was safe; the rumour spread that all the Rajput states were doomed; that the old order was passing away. Henry Lawrence had saved Karauli—such was the incorrect report—but those who thought with him, who sympathised with native sentiment, were few in number; and when their influence need no longer be reckoned with the map of India would be uniformly red.

Under quite different circumstances the doctrine of lapse had been interpreted in a manner destined to have an important bearing upon the Mutiny and upon the fate

of Sir Henry Lawrence. Early in the century the head of the Mahratta Confederacy had, by an act of unprovoked aggression, forfeited his kingdom. He had, however, met with generous treatment, in the form of a pension of eight lacs. Grateful for the clemency the deposed Peishwa rendered substantial aid during the Afghan and Sikh wars. Previous to his death in 1851 he had adopted a kinsman known as Dundu Pant—the Nana Sahib of infamous memory, “a quiet, unostentatious young man, not at all addicted to any extravagant habits, and invariably showing a ready disposition to attend to the advice of the British Commissioner.” Dundu Pant, with the rest of the late raja’s large army of dependants, fully expected a continuation of the pension and of the titular dignity hitherto accorded, but the decision of the Government was against him. Well aware that Lord Dalhousie was immovable the Nana Sahib memorialised the Company and sent the notorious Azimulla Khan to England, where, though he gained nothing for his master, he had the satisfaction of becoming the lion of a London season.

The extinction of the Mahratta principalities would have entailed consequences of comparatively small importance, serving chiefly to agitate the native mind and arouse suspicions and fears for the future, had not the closing chapter of Lord Dalhousie’s regime been so momentous for good and evil. His first act had been the annexation of the Punjab, a policy of benefit incalculable; his last was the absorption of Oudh, a step—taken on behalf of the natives of that unhappy kingdom—which hastened and perhaps made certain the Mutiny. The story of the annexation of Oudh is essential to this narrative, leading up, as it does, to the crowning episodes in the lives of the brothers.

From the date of the East India Company’s supremacy in India the Mohammedan viceroys of the important province

of Oudh had been our friendly allies, and its people had been the mainstay of the native army, so much so that the term *poorbeah*, now applied indiscriminately to the sepoys, had originally served to indicate the men from Oudh. For fifty years its nawabs (viceroys of the Delhi emperor) had been supported by British bayonets in fulfilment of a treaty. But though this same treaty bound the nawab to administer the country in a manner that "should be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects" and "in conformity with the counsels of the officers of the East India Company," Oudh rapidly became the worst-governed kingdom of the East. The reason was apparent. Tyranny and misrule are generally tempered to the power of the tyrannised to resist. In Oudh there was no check on the profligacy, vice, and extortion of the nawabs, who were free from care, for had not the English undertaken to uphold them? The nawabs of Oudh had always been loyal to the suzerain power; there was no instance of treachery or of aid given to an enemy. In time of war they had supplied our armies with transport, grain, and cash; in all matters other than internal reform they had been prompt to meet the wishes of the Government of India; and they imagined that the Governor-General would not readily find an excuse for the appropriation of their country.

In the *Calcutta Review* of a much earlier date Sir Henry had pointed out that English interference in Oudh had wrought harm to the people. The paramount power was compelled by treaty to place a number of regiments at the service of the nawab; British officials had the right to advise and threaten and otherwise annoy the court of Oudh by their futile attempts to curb the king's desires, but no power to insist that their advice should be acted upon. They were thus placed in a false position calculated to harm rather than to benefit. The nawabs of Oudh do not appear to have been actively cruel so much as utterly

indifferent to the consequences of their self-indulgence; they did that which was evil because vice was easy and alluring, not because they found their pleasure in the misery of their subjects. "They had not the energy to be tyrants," said Kaye.

The nawab had been warned by successive administrations; he paid no heed and the wretchedness of Oudh increased year by year. Three courses were open to the Governor-General; to propose the annulment of the treaty and the withdrawal of the protecting British troops in the hope that a sense of his own weakness would induce the king to recognise at least the folly of his misrule; to depose him and administer the land for the benefit of the natives; and, thirdly, to take possession absolutely.

Until the summer of 1854, when Outram succeeded him, the Resident at Lucknow (the capital of Oudh) had been Colonel Sleeman, the suppressor of *thuggee*, a man whose views on this and kindred topics coincided with those of Henry Lawrence and of Generals Low and Outram. His advice was: "Assume the administration but do not grasp the revenues of the country."¹ In the *Calcutta Review* of 1845 Henry Lawrence had written from Nepal: "Let not a rupee come into the Company's coffers. Let Oudh be at last governed, not for one man, the King, but for him and his people." "What the people want and most earnestly pray for," said Sleeman, "is that our government should take upon itself the responsibility of governing them well and permanently. All classes, save the knaves, who now surround and govern the King, earnestly pray for this—the educated classes because they would then have a chance of respectable employment, which none of them now have; the middle classes, because they find no protection or encouragement, and no hope

¹ Sleeman's Correspondence quoted in *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. pp. 136 *et seq.*

that their children will be permitted to inherit the property they leave . . . and the humbler classes, because they are now abandoned to the merciless rapacity of the starving troops. . . .”

But while urging this step upon the Court of Directors Sleeman sounded a note of warning, which passed unheeded. “If we do this,” he wrote, “we must, in order to stand well with the rest of India, honestly and distinctly disclaim all interested motives, and appropriate the whole of the revenues for the benefit of the People and Royal Family of Oudh. If we do this all India will think us right.” And he foretold to the Governor-General that, otherwise, “it would tend to accelerate the crisis which the doctrine of the absorbing school must sooner or later bring upon us.”

Though the doctors might differ as to treatment, they were agreed that the condition of Oudh had become so critical that the Government of India must interfere in its affairs. The champions of native states were of opinion that to absorb the province would be to punish the people of Oudh for having been the victims of oppression. They could see what so many Englishmen were blind to—that even though the natives might acknowledge that the more enlightened principles of English administration would change their lot for the better, they might not care to purchase this at the price of dependence upon the caprice of the alien, and by the sacrifice of the birthright of their children’s children.¹ To put aside the Nawab and take temporary charge of the country, until such time as a

¹ The native point of view was expressed to Mr. Irwin (*Chapters on Oudh History and Affairs*, p. 174) by a zamindar of Oudh, who had been one of the chief sufferers from the nawab’s misrule, who had gained in material prosperity by the change, and who was a well-wisher of the English. He asked why the nawab had been deposed, terming him “a poor weak creature, a humble servant and follower of the British,” and was unable to understand that the British Government could no longer tolerate the misrule and disorder of Oudh. What had that to do with the British Government?

capable and upright native ruler might be found or trained, would be not only justifiable but a moral duty that the Company should not seek to evade.

But Lord Dalhousie was immovably convinced that the unhappy country could derive only temporary benefit from such temporary arrangement. On June 18, 1855, he signed the Minute in which he advocated that, though the king might retain his crown, "all powers, jurisdiction, rights, and claims" were to be vested in the Company, and, "the surplus revenue to be at the disposal of the Company." But the Home Government declared for annexation pure and simple; in February 1856 Oudh became a British province, and Lord Dalhousie, who, with a sense of duty that was nothing less than heroic, had stayed in India beyond his time, at the risk and, as it proved, at the cost of his life, in order to complete his task, handed over the government to Lord Canning.

CHAPTER XXI

(*May 1856 - May 1857*)

LUCKNOW AND OUDH

Henry Lawrence in Lucknow—Disaffection—Causes of Discontent—
The Greased Cartridges—Mungul Pandey—Lawrence's Popu-
larity and Influence—An Abortive Revolt—Speech to the
People.

OUTRAM, who had remained at Lucknow as Chief Commissioner, soon broke down in health and the post became vacant. Sir Henry Lawrence, who had recently refused Lord Dalhousie's offer of Hyderabad because of ill-health, was attracted by the thought of the good work he might do in the newly-annexed province. He wrote to Lord Canning to express his readiness to undertake the task, and "the first misfortune that befell the ministry of Lord Canning"¹ was that the letter conveying the proposal arrived too late. Mr. Coverley Jackson had already been appointed.

Under the new regime the classes hitherto privileged fared badly indeed and native susceptibility was held in slight regard. Mr. Jackson loved a stormy atmosphere and his time was largely taken up by disputations with his colleagues; Mr. Martin Gubbins, the Financial Commissioner, was equally keen to fight, and all idea of a beneficent administration of Oudh seemed to have been abandoned in favour of a series of interminable controversies.

Thirty-four years had passed since Henry Lawrence, the

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 7.

young man rejoicing in his strength, had first set foot in India. The climate and the endless work had broken down the stalwart frame, and now, in the autumn of 1856, he was compelled by ill-health to ask Lord Canning for home leave. He had been a martyr to Arracan fever ever since as a youth he took part in the First Burma War, and had only spent a few months in England during the last twenty-seven years. The leave was granted, but before he had made his preparations for departure came a tempting offer from the Viceroy, who, having arrived at the conclusion that Mr. Jackson's reign in Oudh was impracticable, now asked if Sir Henry would like the responsibility.

A fallen people to be raised from the dust; a sullen, vicious upper class to be reconciled; fifty thousand disbanded levies to be settled peacefully; a discontented peasantry and yeomanry to be helped—here were tasks peculiarly suited to his genius and temperament. Might not the ardour of his sympathy with those who had as yet experienced little consideration at the hands of the English, and his interest in so great and difficult a work, have a favourable effect upon his health? He sought medical advice and replied that he was ready to go to Lucknow at a day's notice; that though five or six distinct diseases had laid hold of him, and though four doctors had delivered the verdict that he must leave India, his own doctor, who knew the elasticity of his constitution, was of opinion that an employment into which he could throw himself with zest might prove beneficial. He quitted Rajputana towards the close of the winter of 1856-1857, his office there being taken by his brother George, as his place in the Punjab had been filled by John. The Rajputs had come to regard him as their champion; his courteous and chivalrous bearing, his benevolent, paternal guidance, and his sympathetic interest in their affairs had gained their affection, and his strength of purpose their respect.

From Agra he wrote to Edwardes:

" . . . You say you are sorry I am going. And so *am* I. I give up a great deal, indeed *all* my private desires, my little daughter, my sons, my sisters, and probably my health. But I could not withstand the offer, made as it was by Lord Canning; I have also the vanity to think I can do good. . . . Man can but die once, and if I die in Oude, after having saved some poor fellows' hearths, or skins, or *izzut* (reputation), I shall have no reason for discontent. . . . But the price I pay is high, for I had quite set my heart on going home."¹

"Dented all over with defeats and disappointments, honourable scars in the eyes of the bystanders," as Edwardes had said at an earlier date, Sir Henry Lawrence, who, "had fought every losing battle for the old Chiefs and Jaghirdars with entire disregard to his own interests,"² arrived in Lucknow in March 1857. He immediately visited the gaols and found the sentries at the mercy of the prisoners. The military arrangements were equally bad, the troops, having been scattered over the district, would be unable to afford mutual support, and the magazine was practically unprotected. He promptly changed all this. Mr. Jackson, whom he was superseding, he found amiable, energetic, and kindly, "though I told him he was very wrong in some of his acts;" the masterful Martin Gubbins he liked and admired, though firmly opposed to his fiscal arrangements; and both Gubbins and Ommaney, the Judicial Commissioner, needed a strong man over them. The policy of the Dead Level³ had been fatal. The talukdars—the large landholders of Oudh—had been brought down to the wretched condition of the common

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 279.

² Raikes, *Notes on the Revolt*, p. 33.

³ The term applied by opponents to the theory of the Thomason School that there should be no intermediate class between the peasantry and the Government.

people, but what benefit had accrued by the process would be hard to discover, for greater pains had been taken to punish the wrong-doer than to alleviate the sufferings of the victim. The peasantry had gained nothing thereby and, strangely enough, they were in no wise grateful to the oppressors of their oppressors, as the satisfaction of knowing that the mighty had been put down from their seats had not filled the hungry with good things.

A talukdar was nominally a revenue-contractor, authorised to collect the revenue of a district and to keep what remained after the payment of a stipulated sum to the Mohammedan ruler. Some of the Oudh talukdars had secured this privilege by the simple process of bidding higher than their competitors; others were the descendants of Hindu rajas, who had been granted the right over their former estates in order to reconcile them to the rule of the Mogul. The weakness and laxity of the nawabs of Oudh had prompted many talukdars to increase their estates, and at the same time their privileges, at the expense of the smaller proprietors and village communities, and as there was little check on their rapacity, they had naturally developed into tyrants. When Oudh was annexed no less than two-thirds of the province was in the hands of these "feudal barons." No sooner was the country brought under English rule than the talukdars were punished for their own crimes or the sins of their forefathers. Although they had been given to understand that for three years, pending inquiry, they would be permitted to remain in possession of all lands held at the date of annexation, General Outram's successor was much too impatient to await the result of a thorough inquiry before despoiling of their supposed plunder those whom he considered no better than robbers. Most of the talukdars, who then lost villages and lands, had little claim to sympathy, but there is no doubt that others suffered mainly on account

of the bad name of their class. The whole aristocracy of Oudh was treated harshly; pensions and allowances that had been promised were withheld, and many nobles and ladies of the court were brought to a pitiable state of destitution.

Had Lord Dalhousie remained in India he would have secured obedience to his orders and fulfilment of his pledges; but Lord Canning, being new to India, was naturally reluctant to overrule an administrator of experience, though he repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with Mr. Jackson's methods.

When Sir Henry arrived in Lucknow the talukdars were openly disaffected. To retrieve the errors of his predecessor and efface the consequences of half a century of misrule was humanly impossible of accomplishment in the six weeks during which he governed the province. But he achieved more than might have been deemed possible. The condition of the peasantry had first to be improved, but he did not set about the task by stripping the talukdars of the little that remained to them. These were given opportunities to lay their cases before him in durbar and in private, and Mr. Gubbins has said that "all returned satisfied and hopeful, all congratulated themselves on having found a ruler so well disposed to listen to their grievances and remedy them." They had, however, no reason to hope that the sympathetic Chief Commissioner would condone wrong-doing or that he would permit them to retain any land of which they had taken unlawful possession, but they appreciated his sympathy and his consideration. Though time did not permit him to review the whole number of cases, he was able to remedy several instances of injustice, and the hostility of the talukdars seemed likely to abate. Before many months had passed English refugees had reason to be thankful that Henry Lawrence had tempered justice with charity.

For though the great majority of the talukdars joined forces with the mutineers, they acted with greater moderation than they would have done had they still regarded all Englishmen as enemies. When the Englishwomen of the province—wives and daughters of the official instruments of their humiliation—were refugees in their domains, absolutely at their mercy, the talukdars, with one or two exceptions, connived at their escape.

After the Mutiny a reaction set in strongly in favour of the talukdars, who were then established as proprietors of estates to which even they had hardly dared to lay claim, and it was John Lawrence who, nearly ten years later, restored to the ryot and petty zamindar of Oudh some few of the rights they had lost while the talukdars were a petted class. Here was an instance of the harm wrought by that type of reforming zeal which concentrates its energy upon the punishing of the oppressor rather than upon making amends to the oppressed. It is probable that if Henry Lawrence, the chief opponent of the Dead Level policy, had been sent to Oudh when the influence of the Thomason School was at its height, the abuses of the talukdar system would have been rectified and the privileges of the talukdars curtailed so judiciously that there would have been no excuse for their subsequent petting as an ill-used class; and therefore John Lawrence—the most distinguished of that school—would not have been called upon to confirm the talukdars in the greater part of their unjustly acquired possessions in order to restore a portion to the original owners.

Sir John Kaye has described how Sir Henry's eyes were opened to the wide-spread discontent prevailing among the sepoys, and his mind to an apprehension of coming trouble. Long ago he had perceived the danger, but had not foreseen its imminence. He now sought the opinions of many of the more intelligent sepoys and native officers,

and warned Lord Canning that the Bengal Army, influenced by hatred or by blind panic, was prepared to accept any rumour, however wild, of the intentions of the English to put aside native rule, to convert forcibly or fraudulently to Christianity, to ignore all native sentiment, prejudice, and tradition, and, in fact, to paint the brown man white. Many who had served the Government faithfully were filled by a vague dread that, in spite of their own officers whom they loved and held guiltless, and in spite of their confidence in many of the British officials, the Supreme Government had determined sooner or later, if one means failed then by another, to destroy their caste and all that they held dear. Argument was unavailing. Even those who had not lost their heads, who might be convinced that their fears were groundless, were afraid of their comrades. By confiding in the good intentions of the English they would lose their caste, their most precious possession, and their loyalty would be their social ruin. If friends, parents, brethren, should refuse to eat or drink or hold intercourse with them, what satisfaction would they derive from the approbation of the alien?

Why then were no precautions taken? Why was the whole land from Delhi to Calcutta given over to the sepoy, and Bengal, Oudh, and the North-West Provinces denuded of British regiments? The fault did not lie with him whom men most truly addressed as "the most noble the Governor-General." The proofs of fidelity given under most trying conditions, and the complacent self-assurance that British control must be appreciated by the natives because it had brought peace, encouraged industry and commerce, and manifestly attempted to secure justice—these reflections were a flattering unction to the soul, and they supply the answer. The loyalty of the native troops to their salt had passed into a proverb, and the officers, whom they had followed to victory after victory, would

not believe that their " children " could turn against them. When wounded they had been tended by their brown-skinned warriors with a gentleness that could not be exceeded. They had watched with quiet pleasure the simple delight of the native soldiers in making happy the children of their sahibs, and the affection existing between the sepoys and the little ones. Unable to follow the seemingly inconsistent workings of the Asiatic mind, they were content blindly to accept them as evidences of the intellectual inferiority of the Indian peoples; and they knew that, whereas the Company's white soldiers had more than once shown dangerous symptoms, the outbreaks of the sepoy had hitherto resembled the naughtiness of a child, who injures himself more than others. The Company's officers had many virtues, but genius was no more common among them than elsewhere; they overlooked the fact that a passive acquiescence is the most favourable sentiment that the rule of the alien is likely to inspire; that the gulf between the races is not to be bridged over while they cannot eat and drink together, nor intermarry; and as to English justice—in the words of Herbert Edwardes—" is there any such frightful bore in the world as your Aristides? " So the incendiary fires and similar warnings were treated as childish outbursts that would soon run their course.

The disproportion between native and European soldiers has been given as the main cause of the Mutiny, but this statement is no more than a half-truth. It is true that without such disproportion there might have been no rising; it was the factor that gave hope of success and placed temptation before the sepoys, and, perhaps, even made a mutiny inevitable. But " the matter of seditions is of two kinds, much poverty and much discontentment. It is certain so many overthrown estates, so many votes for troubles. . . . The causes and motives of seditions are,

innovations in religion, taxes, alterations of laws and customs, breaking of privileges, general oppression, advancement of unworthy persons, strangers, dearths, disbanded soldiers, factions grown desperate; and whatsoever in offending people, joineth and knitteth them in a common cause.”¹

That Oudh, the home of the sepoy, and certain of the Mahratta states were disaffected, and that India in general was uneasy and therefore liable to panic, has been shown. The fine qualities of some of the best men of the new school of administrators were shorn of much of their virtue by a lack of sympathetic insight. The landed proprietors—the class with whom they had dealt most hardly—were the most powerful of the natives, and their influence had not been recognised by the advocates of an English standard of reform. Alongside those who had already been dispossessed of their estates, the nobles that went in fear lest their turn should come swiftly would surely range themselves.

There were also Brahman intriguers at work, chief of whom was Dundu Pant, of Bithur; there were Mohammedans who dreamt of a new Mogul Empire rising from the ashes of the old Delhi dynasty; and the Moslem king and court of Oudh were intent on revenge. There was discontent in an army that had little to offer to the ambitious. In the native armies of bygone days each sepoy carried in his knapsack the baton of a field-marshal; the trooper who possessed a good horse, a sharp sword, and a strong arm, might carve his way to empire. Without going back to times remote, what had been Ranjit Singh's start in life, and who were Scindia and Holkar? Henry Lawrence had pointed out again and again that though the Company provided a career satisfactory to nine out of ten native officers, the capable tenth man was not content with a

¹ Bacon, *Of Seditions and Troubles*.

position which must always be inferior to that of the English subaltern.

The sepoys were now clothed, accoutred, and drilled after the European model. They were compelled to wear a head dress abominated by Mussulman and Hindu alike; the Brahmans were forbidden to wear the cherished caste-mark on their foreheads; the ear-rings, which were regarded as charms against evil spirits, were no longer permitted; the Mohammedans were deprived of the beards of which they had been so proud; and in other ways native sentiment had been impatiently ignored by Englishmen who could not understand that customs, which to them appeared most childish, could be so dear to the hearts of the sepoys.

The extension of the Company's dominions to Burma and Pegu had given further cause of complaint. The Hindu sepoys are attached to their homes, and service beyond the seas is most distasteful. No increase of pay could compensate for the homesickness and the loss of caste involved by crossing the "black water." Biding their time the crafty Brahmans and ambitious schemers watched the growing restiveness with satisfaction. The native soldiers were patient and long-suffering; they were attached to their officers, to their regiments, and to their profession. The pay was good; the pension was sure; and the hour was not yet ripe for mutiny. But the Asiatic can wait.

And suddenly the chance came. The authorities placed in the hands of the intriguers a weapon more potent for evil than any their own invention was likely to devise. "It was so terrible a thing, that if the most malignant enemies of the British Government had sat in conclave for years and brought an excess of devilish ingenuity to bear,"¹ they could have produced nothing better calculated to implant blind terror in the breasts of the sepoys and,

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 490.

by offending Hindu and Mohammedan alike, to drive them coupled to desperation.

“ If there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire.”¹ The new rifled muskets had recently superseded the old *Brown Bess*, and the sepoy were loud in their praise of the paternal Government which had given them a firearm with a range more than double that of the muskets of any probable enemy. “ But unhappily, these rifled barrels could not be loaded without the lubrication of the cartridge. And the voice of joy and praise was suddenly changed into a wild cry of grief and despair when it was bruited abroad that the cartridge, the end of which was to be bitten off by the sepoy, was greased with the fat of the detested swine of the Mohammedan, or the venerated cow of the Hindu.”²

The tidings flashed from cantonment to cantonment in that mysterious fashion peculiar to India. The fiat had gone forth—so ran the rumour—that the barriers of caste were to be broken down and that the Mussulman was to be rendered unclean, in the expectation that when the sepoy had defiled their lips with the accursed thing and so had forfeited all hope of future bliss they would turn to the refuge offered by the Christian religion. Regiment after regiment refused to bite the cartridge; the officers reasoned with their men—some threatened them; the sepoy were told that mutton-fat only had been used, and were given permission to make their own lubrication of beeswax and *ghee*. But no argument could convince them that the cartridges were innocent of offence—the more so that a small quantity of beef-fat *had* through carelessness been used. A panic had seized them and all concessions were regarded as evidence that, this trap having been laid bare, the English were ready to give way, make a show of con-

¹ Bacon, *Of Seditions and Troubles*.

² *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 489.

ciliation—and invent another scheme wherewith to effect their purpose. If permission was given to use their own materials, said the Brahmans, it was because the *ghee* had been defiled. They were also told—and credulity went hand in hand with fear—that ground bullock-bones had been mixed with the flour served out to the troops. Those sepoy who, in ignorance, or because they trusted their officers, had bitten the cartridges found themselves outcasts. Their comrades, even their brethren, would no longer eat or drink or smoke with them, and what such living death means to the twice-born Hindu no European can conceive. No wonder that the victims hated the unclean aliens who had brought them to this pass. The sepoys are like sheep, said a rebel officer to Henry Lawrence, “the leading one tumbles down, and all the rest roll over him.” At Barrackpore, near Calcutta, on March 29, 1857, Mungul Pandey fired the opening shot of the Sepoy War and endowed the mutineers with a new name.

A month of excitement and anxiety followed the execution of the first pandy. From the Indus to the Hughli the glare of incendiary fires chased sleep from the eyes of the white men. Yet the regiments did not break loose and the outnumbered English clung to the hope that the trouble would pass.

During the month of April Sir Henry Lawrence, who had seven hundred British soldiers in Lucknow to hold in check 8000 sepoys backed by twice that number of the nawab’s disbanded troops, prepared to meet the crisis. He spoke reassuringly to the sepoys, and, to some extent, succeeded in calming their excitement. He held durbars to which the Oudh chieftains came in force, and there he gave counsel to the wavering and encouragement to the loyally-disposed. He reminded the assemblies that under English rule no sect had ever been persecuted; to the Mussulman he pointed out that in the Punjab the Sikh yoke had been

removed, and that in the cities of the Manjha the muezzin again summoned the faithful to prayer; he asked the Hindu if his lot had not been made more easy in the Mohammedan states. Though the panic had struck its roots too deep to be easily removed, and though Lucknow was the seat of disaffection, the personal magnetism of the speaker was not unavailing; the outbreak there was delayed and its potency for harm diminished.

But while he kept a cheerful face, showed little sign of depression and anxiety, and appeared to hope for the best, he was quietly anticipating and preparing for the worst. With his finger-tip on the pulse of disaffection he disarmed one corps before it could strike, and schemed—and partially succeeded—to commit sepoys of the other regiments to the English side. Dundu Pant, who visited Lucknow about this time—with what fell design may be guessed—he received with his accustomed courtesy, but he warned General Wheeler at Cawnpore unavailingly against the arch-traitor who professed such attachment to English men and English ways. Without alarming or exasperating the *poorbeahs* he segregated the few score Sikhs and a number of selected Hindus and Mohammedans from the various corps, and resolved to rely upon them—the “dark faces . . . faithful and few,” of Tennyson’s ballad—as upon the white men of the 32nd. Some of the Sikhs had probably seen him in the old days; they all knew his reputation, and the *ikbal* of Henry Lawrence was no light thing to the followers of Govind; and even with the *poorbeahs* his popularity had grown so rapidly that it proved sufficient to keep many sepoys and talukdars loyal personally to himself though their hearts were with their comrades. “They had a saying,” wrote Colonel Wilson,¹ “that when Sir Henry looked twice up to heaven and once down to earth, and then stroked his beard, he knew what to do.”

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 311.

In the same memorandum Colonel Wilson says: "Although he had been so short a time at Lucknow, he had taken a wonderful hold of the respect and love of the European soldiery. One day before the siege Sir Henry had ordered all the garrison to repair to the posts they would have to occupy in the event of an attack. He then went round to see them in their places. On approaching the main body of her Majesty's 32nd, the men raised a tremendous cheer. Sir Henry asked Colonel Inglis why he had made them do this. Colonel Inglis said he had nothing to do with it except trying to stop it. The men had broken out into cheers quite spontaneously. . . . There was a paper published in Lucknow. One day the editor wrote a very mischievous article against Government, and Sir Henry sent for him and warned him that if he wrote again to excite the natives, he would suppress the paper. Soon after this Sir Henry was riding by the house where the paper was edited, and seeing the name up, said to his staff, 'Let us go in and edit the paper for Mr. K.' Going in he said, 'Mr. K., to show you I bear you no ill-will, I am come to write you a leading article.' He then made the staff sit down, and gave Mr. K. all the military views of the day, while he himself dashed off a rapid review of all the resources at the command of Government for meeting and putting down the mutiny. The article did a great deal of good at the time."

The first symptom of active disloyalty in the Lucknow district was displayed on the morning of Sunday, May 3, by the 7th Oudh Irregular Infantry, stationed at Musa Bagh, a suburb some miles to the north-west of the Residency. But though they seized their arms, took possession of the magazine, and loudly announced their determination to murder all their officers, these sepoys of the 7th, though ripe for any mischief if not attended by much risk, proved themselves to be but blustering traitors.

Cowed by the resolution of their officers they returned to their quarters, and in the evening Sir Henry ordered the regiment to parade. As the sepoy fell in, they heard the distant tramp of men and horses and the rattle and clank of the guns, and before they had realised its import the European artillery and infantry and the irregular cavalry were within striking distance. Some few fled and were captured; the majority laid down their arms, were placed under arrest, and the troops marched back to cantonments. A few days later Sir Henry summoned the chief men of the district, the native officers, and a proportion of sepoy from each corps to a durbar in the grounds of the Residency to witness, not the punishment of the rebels, but the rewards conferred upon loyalty.

“Soldiers!” he said, “Soldiers! some persons are abroad spreading reports that the Government desire to interfere with the religion of their soldiers; *you* all know this to be a transparent falsehood; you, and your forefathers before you, well know and knew that for more than a hundred years the religion of your countrymen has never been interfered with.” He reminded the assembly that for many centuries India had had no experience of such religious toleration as came with English rule, and after warning them of the might of England, he appealed to their *esprit de corps*. “All governments employ and cherish the faithful and the zealous, and punish the lukewarm and ungrateful. No army in the world has done better service than that of Bengal. I am a witness to this fact; so are these gallant officers, Brigadiers Handscombe and Gray, Colonels Halford and Palmer, and many, many officers now present, who have led you to victory, fought at your head, and bled in your ranks—whose well-earned decorations attest your bravery, and which are the proud records of many a well-contested field won by your valour, your discipline, your intrepidity. Many, like myself,

have grown grey in your company; have been associated with you from our boyhood; have shared in your campaigns; have participated in all your dangers, privations, and triumphs, in camp and in quarters—from the swamps of Burmah to the snows of Bamean. We are all your friends—our interests are inseparable; if your faces are blackened, so are ours; if any dishonour befalls you do we not suffer? Let there be no lukewarmness. . . . The guilt of many has been that they simply looked on at the vile wickedness of a few.

“Take warning! Now turn to these good and faithful soldiers—Subahdar Sewak Tewaree, Havildar Heera Lall Doobee, Ramnath Doobee, Sepahee of the 48th N. I., and to Hosein Buksh, of the 13th Regiment, who have set to you all a good example. The three first at once arrested the bearer of a seditious letter, and brought the whole circumstances to the notice of superior authority. You know well what the consequences were: and what has befallen the 7th Oudh Irregular Infantry. Look at Hosein Buksh of the 13th, fine fellow as he is. Is he not a good and faithful soldier?—did he not seize three villains, who are now in confinement and awaiting their doom? It is to reward such fidelity, such acts and deeds as I have mentioned, and of which you are all well aware, that I have called you all together this day, to assure you that those who are faithful and true to their salt will always be amply rewarded and well cared for; that the great Government which we all serve is prompt to reward, swift to punish, vigilant, anxious, eager to protect its faithful subjects; but firm, determined, resolute, to crush all who may have the temerity to rouse its vengeance. Think well of what I have said; reflect on what has passed; listen to your elders and seniors, who have served the Government for nearly half a century, and you must be satisfied that the Government which you serve has never attempted

to influence in any way, underhand or otherwise, the religious convictions of its subjects or soldiers; that it freely permits all to worship at the altar before which their forefathers have bowed—but that, whilst allowing the fullest, freest religious liberty to all, it will vigorously exact that legitimate duty from its army, without which discipline cannot exist; that under no circumstances whatever will it listen to, or reason with, mutineers or armed mobs; and should—which God forbid!—any misguided men, dupes of fools and knaves, attempt to follow in the footsteps of the 19th and 34th, rest assured that Government, all-powerful and irresistible, is not only prepared and capable, but will lose no time in inflicting such punishment as shall not easily pass away from the recollection of man. And now, soldiers! it is my pleasing duty to reward, in the name of Government, those who have served it so well and so honourably.”¹

The speech made a deep impression upon the minds of the talukdars and of many of the comrades of the fortunate sepoy of the 48th and 13th whom Sir Henry next addressed:

“Advance, Subahdar Sewak Tewaree; come forward, Havildar and soldiers, and receive these splendid gifts from the Government which is proud to number you among its soldiers; accept these honorary sabres—you have won them well, long may you live to wear them in honour. Take these sums of money for your families and relatives; wear these robes of honour at your homes and at your festivals; and may the bright example which you have so conspicuously set, find, as it doubtless will, followers in every regiment and company in the army!”

¹ Cave-Browne's *Punjab and Delhi*, p. 32.

[illegible]

Scale  42 Miles.

CHAPTER XXII

(May - August 1857)

THE MUTINY

The Outbreak at Meerut—Bahadur Shah proclaimed Emperor—John Lawrence's prompt Action—Lord Canning and the Lawrences—State of the Punjab—Loyalty of the Cis-Sutlej Princes—Corbett and Montgomery at Lahore—The Movable Column—"King John"—Jalandar—Multan—A "Master-stroke" at Peshawar—Becher—The Punjab Army before Delhi—Proposed Abandonment of Peshawar—Jhelum—Sialkot—Lawrence sends Nicholson to take Delhi.

JOHN LAWRENCE "was emphatically a man without a weakness . . . of adamant strength that would neither bend nor break. . . . Men said that he had no sentiment, no romance . . . but there was an intense reality about him such as I have never seen equalled. He seemed to be continually toiling onwards, upwards, as if life were not meant for repose, with the grand princely motto '*I serve*' inscribed in characters of light on his forehead. He served God as unceasingly as he served the state; and set before all his countrymen in the Punjab the true pattern of a Christian gentleman."¹

He was to be put to a test that would search out every weakness; and failure to endure would bring with it the downfall of the English in Asia. Hitherto he had been found equal to every emergency: the administration of the Punjab had been the greatest work ever accomplished in a conquered land. Now the day of England's supreme

¹ Kaye, *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. pp. 64-65.

need in India had dawned; the storm had burst, and he that would face it, and neither bend nor break, must indeed be of adamant strength.

In Delhi, the political capital of Hindustan, John Lawrence the youth had given the first proofs of his ability; it was here that his matured genius was to have full play. The degenerate House of Timur, saved by the British from being trampled under the feet of Hindu feudatories, had been permitted to retain the imperial title, but with no substantive power beyond the walls of the palace. In the year 1857 Bahadur Shah, the last representative of the Mogul line, was an old man, infirm, without ambition, a poetaster, and not of the fibre of which leaders of lost causes are made.

To sixty millions of Mohammedans in India and beyond the borders Bahadur Shah was nevertheless the symbol of ancient Moslem glory; and tradition had imposed upon double that number of Hindus a recognition of the divine right of the Mogul to possess the land. The dangers of this anomaly—a king in name, wielding no kingly power, exercising none of the functions of his office, yet enshrined the more securely in the hearts of a conservative people because, by granting the title, the English had tacitly admitted the divine right—had not been ignored, and a decree had been issued that, after his death, the title must lapse. In deference to the titular dignity, and as a concession to native sentiment, no other troops had been quartered in Delhi than a small guard for the Arsenal wherein was stored India's chief supply of munitions of war. On and below the Ridge, a mile beyond the western walls, half a dozen native regiments were stationed; and the nearest English troops were at Meerut some fifty miles to the north-east. Meerut was the largest cantonment in India, and as it contained the greatest proportion of British troops of all branches of the service, little fear

of an outbreak was entertained. The white force was sufficient to crush a rising at its inception, and no expectation of success could encourage the sepoys there to make a bid for empire.

John Lawrence was at Rawul Pindi, on his way to the hills, when a telegram from Delhi was brought to him. "*The sepoys have come in from Meerut and are burning everything. . . . We must shut up.*" Bahadur Shah had been acclaimed Emperor of Hindustan.

In silence he went into his room, and when he emerged he was armed against the danger; he had resolved upon the outlines of that policy which, by the great-hearted subordination of the Punjab's interests to those of India, succeeded in securing both. The full significance of the news was not hidden from him. Though he underestimated the military value of the rebel success, he clearly discerned how potent would be the glamour of the Mogul name, when acclaimed by the sepoys and the populace of the capital. While he prepared for the worst he hoped to learn on the morrow that the extent of the disaster had been exaggerated and that the British cavalry and the galloper guns had entered Delhi on the heels of the mutineers and had brought the city to its senses. He asked himself how the rebels could have been allowed to reach Delhi; why they had not been swept away by the guns? where were the Carabineers? and had the 60th Rifles made common cause with the sepoys?

The story of muddle and incapacity at Meerut is still painful to contemplate. The sepoys had mutinied against their better judgment—from the point of view of policy, not of ethics—urged thereto by the taunts of courtesans of the bazaar. Having committed themselves, dread of the consequences drove them to desperation; they set fire to the English bungalows and murdered the white population, and when the European regiments were sent

for, the 60th Rifles lacked ball-cartridge, the artillery were short of guns, the Carabineers had only half the number of horses they needed, and many of the troopers were recruits who could not ride. To complete the muddle the Carabineer officer deliberately called over the roll of his corps when he should have been leading a gallop to the English quarter of the town. Night had fallen before the brigade was ready to pursue; the sepoy, amazed that they still lived, were in full flight towards Delhi; and the general in command did not know which way they had taken. He might have guessed. There was only one road along which they were likely to go; yet he chose to keep his troops in Meerut to protect what remained of the station from the ravages of the budmashes and released gaol-birds, a duty for which one-third of his force would have sufficed.

Straining their ears to catch the sound of pursuing hoofs and shuddering as Fancy played her tricks upon them, the rebels continued their flight throughout the night, and arrived before the gates of Delhi after sunrise. Permission to enter was at first refused, but the sepoy contrived to get inside, and as the amazing news ran through the city the populace was divided between fear and delight. Delhi did not straightway make common cause with the murderers, but as the hours passed and the look-outs on the towers could see no sign of the avengers from Meerut, Bahadur Shah was proclaimed Emperor of Hind. The British officers, women, and children, to the number of fifty, were put to death, the Arsenal guard mutinied, and after a gallant attempt on the part of its English officers and non-commissioned officers to hold out until the Carabineers and the Horse Artillery should arrive, Lieutenant Willoughby and his glorious eight blew up the huge magazine, and Delhi was lost to the British.

The sepoy below the Ridge did not join the mutineers

at once. They also waited, fearfully, until certain that no move was being made from Meerut—Oh, for an hour of John Nicholson!—and then the six regiments enrolled themselves under the banner of the Mogul.

“Native troops in open mutiny—cantonment south of nullah burnt—several European officers killed—*European troops defending barracks.*” Such was the telegram sent to the Commander-in-Chief by the officer commanding at Meerut, and no strictures upon his failure to grasp the situation could be more damning than his own words. Truly, General Hewitt was unable to see the forest for the trees.¹

What a contrast to this incapacity was the grasp and insight of Lord Canning and his chief lieutenants! The Governor-General no sooner heard the news than he understood its import—that the loss of Delhi, unless quickly retrieved, might mean the loss of India. He telegraphed to John Lawrence to send troops from the Punjab to the Mogul capital; and his message was crossed by one from the Chief Commissioner, informing him that, as Delhi must be captured, he was taking upon himself the responsibility of sending some Punjab regiments down.

Henry Lawrence had the same broad views. He could

¹ In the year 1843, when Resident in Nepal, Henry Lawrence, in a paper on the *Necessity of Chronic Readiness for War*, had foretold what would happen in case of an outbreak at Delhi, with which the British were not prepared to deal without a moment's delay. “Does any sane man doubt,” he asked, “that twenty-four hours would swell the hundreds of rebels into thousands; and that if such conduct on our part lasted for a week, every ploughshare in the Delhi States would be turned into a sword? . . . We should then be literally striking for our existence, at the most inclement season of the year, with the prestige of our name vanished. . . . But the parallel does not end here. Suppose the officer commanding at Meerut, when called on for help, were to reply, ‘My force is chiefly cavalry and horse-artillery, and not the sort to be effective within a walled town, where every house is a castle. Besides. Meerut itself, at all times unquiet, is even now in rebellion, and I cannot spare my troops.’”

depend on 700 white soldiers to hold Lucknow against the assaults of 50,000 fighting-men, but his message was not, "Send me help or all will be lost," but, "Delhi must be re-captured; it is more important than all else."

An Indian force under Outram had been sent to Persia, and an army from England was on the sea, on its way to China. Canning recalled Outram's regiments and, though he had no authority over the China Expedition, he, with a great man's readiness to accept responsibility, sent to intercept the fleet, and was just in time. He had decided upon this step when the telegraph brought Sir Henry Lawrence's advice to "Get every European you can from China, Ceylon, and elsewhere; also all the Gurkhas from the hills," and his request, "Give me plenary military power in Oudh; I will not use it unnecessarily." Not a moment was lost before flashing back the inspiring reply, "You have full military powers: the Governor-General will support you in everything you think necessary." Almost at the same time came the suggestion from John that the China and Persia forces should be sent for, and the request that he might raise Punjabi levies and make use of the Sikh rajas of the Cis-Sutlej and Trans-Sutlej States; and Canning's reply was in similarly appreciative terms.

Sir Henry also asked permission to enlist the aid of Jung Bahadur, his acquaintance of the murderous Nepal durbar, an ardent soldier who might be glad of the chance to "blood" his quaint army against the pandies in the disturbed districts contiguous to the Nepal frontier. Canning replied: "I cannot express the satisfaction I feel in having you in Oudh. You have got authority to ask Jung Bahadur for his Gurkhas. It is most unpalatable to me to give it, and to you, probably, to receive it. It is a humiliating confession of our weakness."

The weakness, however, was already too apparent. Jung Bahadur, Gulab Singh, Dost Mohammed, all knew that

along a stretch of some hundreds of miles through the richest provinces of Hindustan hardly a white regiment was to be found.

The comprehensive glance of the Governor-General swept the land from Peshawar to Calcutta, from Kashmir to Ceylon. He perceived that the chief elements of danger lay in Oudh and the Punjab; that the former was the more likely to go against the English, the latter the more powerful for good or ill. The Punjab had by far the larger garrison of British troops, and from it Delhi must be retaken. But, if the Europeans were withdrawn from the frontier where they held the tribesmen in check, the Pathans would probably sink their blood-feuds and sweep through the passes to help drive the whites into the sea. If the Punjab Irregulars should join the poorbeahs, the British garrison would be overwhelmed; if the peasants should be induced to rise against the dominant race, the Khalsa would once more become a terrible reality. For in the Punjab, unlike the other provinces, the cultivators were all fighting-men.

¹“ But if there were much trouble and anxiety in these thoughts, they had their attendant consolations. Let what might happen in Oudh and the Punjab, the Lawrences were there. The Governor-General had abundant faith in them both; faith in their courage, their constancy, their capacity for command; but most of all he trusted them because they coveted responsibility. It is only from an innate sense of strength that this desire proceeds; only in obedience to the unerring voice of Nature that strong men press forward to grasp what weak men shrink from possessing.”

As the mutiny spread the Punjab was gradually cut off, and Sir John Lawrence was no longer able to communicate freely with the Governor-General. He was responsible

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. i. p. 613.

for his own province and his first duty was to hold it safe. The Punjab garrison consisted, on May 12, of some 60,000 men, of whom 10,000 were Europeans, 36,000 poorbeahs of the Regular Army, and 14,000 Punjab Irregulars. The white regiments were mainly stationed in two districts, the Peshawar Valley and the Sutlej frontier, at the eastern and western extremities of the province; the irregulars were scattered along the Afghan frontier. If the latter stood loyal the poorbeahs could be held in check; if they preferred to play for their own hands, the people would rise and the province would be lost. The arrogance of the poorbeahs towards the vanquished soldiers of the Khalsa had made them hated; it was the harder to bear inasmuch that the Punjabi believed himself the better man, and John Lawrence hoped that the temptation to prove this might be the means of saving his province. Another ground for hope—outside the Lawrence influence—must in fairness be set down. The last three harvests in the Punjab had been exceptionally heavy, and the years of plenty do not foster rebellion.

But he was not content to secure his own charge; he intended to save India. Without a day's unnecessary delay he sent the Guides from Mardan in the extreme North-West on their seven hundred miles' march to Delhi. After them went the 1st Punjabis (Coke's Afridis), the 4th Sikhs, and the 4th Punjab Infantry. Doubt of the wisdom of this frontier-denuding policy was expressed: the tribesmen might be unable to resist the temptation. "Take the initiative," was, in effect, the answer of John Lawrence. "Don't wait to be attacked. Show confidence in yourselves and the Oriental will feel confidence in your strength."

His next move was to reduce the odds by locking up a number of sepoys where they could do no harm. Several of the regiments that had given evidence of disaffection

he split into detachments and sent across the Indus to take the place of the irregulars. Had they mutinied in the detestable Pathan country they would have been as sheep among wolves.

Communication with Simla was still open and the Head of the Punjab chafed at the delay, and on May 13 he urged the Commander-in-Chief to take immediate action before Delhi. "I make no apology for writing to your Excellency plainly and fully," he said. "I consider this to be the greatest crisis which has ever occurred in India. Our European force is so small that, unless effectively handled in the outset, and brought to bear, it will prove unequal to the emergency. But with vigour and promptitude, under the blessing of God, it will be irresistible."¹

To the same, May 21, 1857.

" . . . We are doing all we can to strengthen ourselves, and to reinforce you either by direct or indirect means. But can your Excellency suppose, for one moment, that the Irregular troops will remain staunch, if they see our European soldiers cooped up in their cantonments, tamely awaiting the progress of events? . . . Pray only reflect on the whole history of India. Where have we failed when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels? Clive with 1200 men fought at Plassey, in opposition to the advice of his leading officers, beat 40,000 men and conquered Bengal. . . . Look at the Cabul catastrophe. It might have been averted by resolute and bold action. . . . How can it be supposed that strangers and mercenaries will sacrifice everything for us? There is a point up to which they will stand by us; for they know that we have always been eventually successful, and that we are good masters. But, go beyond this point, and every man will look to his immediate benefit, his present safety.

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 481.

"The Punjab Irregulars are marching down in the highest spirits, proud to be trusted, and, eager to show their superiority over the regular troops, ready to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Europeans. But if, on their arrival, they find the Europeans behind breast-works, they will begin to think that the game is up. Recollect that all this time, while we are pausing, the emissaries of the mutineers are writing to and visiting every cantonment.

"It seems to me lamentable to think that in no case have the mutineers yet suffered. . . . I cannot comprehend what the Commissariat can mean by requiring from sixteen to twenty days to procure provisions! I am persuaded that all you can require to take with you must be procurable in two or three. . . ."¹

General Anson was an honoured and zealous soldier, though not a Nicholson to brush aside obstacles which, viewed through the distorting mist of doubt and diffidence, appeared too great to be moved. He did not resent the advice of the civilian, but welcomed and invited it, and even stated that he would rather trust to the views of the Punjab Chief Commissioner than to his own experience. But Lawrence was impatient at the inability of the military authorities to rise to the occasion. He remembered his first commission from a Governor-General, and how, at the beginning of the First Sikh War, he had collected draught animals and carts by the thousand in the space of a few days when the Commissary-General had stated that he would require as many weeks.

He asked the Sikh chieftains of the Protected States to show their gratitude to the Power that had saved them from Ranjit Singh, and Patiala, Jhind, Nabha, and Kapurthala drew their swords and unlocked their treasures, and placed both at his service. Their troops patrolled the

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. pp. 493-495.

Grand Trunk Road, kept open the communications between Delhi and Lahore, and escorted through their territories the supplies for the besieging force. Jhind, indeed, was the first man, native or European, to strike the mutineers. "I am not fond of native chiefs," Lawrence wrote to Lord Canning, a month later, "but I am bound to say that these two [Patiala and Jhind] deserve almost any reward your lordship could bestow." He wrote to influential Sikhs who were under a cloud because of their share in the rebellion of the Khalsa and advised them to grasp this chance of retrieving their characters by enrolling their retainers against the mutineers. They did so, and before they understood the weakness of the whites and how near to realisation had been their dream of a greater Khalsa, they were at Delhi, committed to the British side, and hundreds of miles distant from the districts in which they had influence.

The Mohammedans of the Punjab were no less loyal than the Sikhs. "When we had no military force near Kurnal, and all men watched anxiously the conduct of each loyal chief, the Nawab of Kurnal went to Mr. Le Bas and addressed him to the following effect: 'Sir, I have had a sleepless night in meditating on the state of affairs; I have decided to throw in my lot with yours. My sword, my purse, and my followers are at your disposal.'"¹

Those jaghirdars whose battle Henry had fought successfully also came forward to furnish men for the new corps; and the Chief Commissioner was able to write to the Governor-General that "Your lordship need not fear for us."

To every poorbeah officer in the Punjab he issued a copy of his brother's proclamation to the Oudh sepoys. At this period every official who had sepoys under his control was confronted by the toughest problem of the Mutiny—

¹ Mr. Raikes' *Notes on the Revolt*.

whether a handful of Europeans should risk precipitating a crisis by attempting to disarm the sepoy, or whether, while simulating confidence in their integrity, the better policy would not be to appeal to the loyalty of their men and trust to their escaping the infection. No general rule could be laid down, so much depended on the men who had to meet the danger. Each must judge for himself, from his knowledge of the sepoy's temper, his confidence in his own ability to effect the disarming, the power of his influence to calm the panic and counteract the intrigues of the sepoy leaders.

At Mian Mir, the cantonment of the Lahore division, a large force of sepoy and a few white troops were stationed. During the absence of the Chief Commissioner at Rawul Pindi, Montgomery, his Derry schoolfellow, was in civil charge over the Sikh capital. At Montgomery's request Captain Richard Lawrence of the Police (the youngest of the brothers) had been investigating the state of feeling at Mian Mir, and had for this purpose employed a Brahman whose loyalty he thoroughly trusted. The Brahman's report left little room for doubt, and when the bad news arrived from Delhi, Richard Lawrence had no consolation to offer his chief, no assurance that, whatever the Meerut sepoy might have done, their own men were faithful. "Sahib," the Brahman had said to him, "they are full of sedition," and, touching his throat significantly, he added, "They are up to this in it."¹

Montgomery agreed with the police captain that no time was to be lost, and Brigadier Corbett, with the calm resolution of one strong in moral courage, took the same view as his civilian colleague, and expressed his readiness to take the responsibility of disarming the poorbeahs. Shortly after dawn on May 13, four sepoy regiments, a handful of Europeans of her Majesty's 81st, and a detach-

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. ii. p. 427.

ment of artillery were assembled on the parade-ground. A simple manœuvre brought the unsuspecting sepoys in front of the guns, behind which, during the movement, the companies of the 81st had fallen back. The portfires were in the gunners' hands, the muskets of the English infantry were loaded, and, on the word of command, the sepoys laid down their arms.

Not a blow was struck in this first battle in the Punjab, yet a great victory was won, and the noise of it travelled beyond the borders and caused many whom the Meerut bungling had convinced that the English had lost their virility, and who were about to take advantage of that helplessness, to reconsider their attitude. John Lawrence's delight was unbounded when the wires brought to Rawul Pindi the confirmation of his belief that he had subordinates upon whose tact and promptness he could rely. "Your Lahore men," he wrote to Montgomery, "have done nobly. I should like to embrace them; Donald, Roberts, Mac., and Dick are, all of them, *pucca* trumps."

The impression made upon the power-worshipping Punjabis by the promptness and resource shown at Mian Mir influenced the Chief Commissioner in favour of disarming the sepoy regulars throughout the province. "Our policy is to trust the people but not the Regulars," he said, though, in a letter to Edwardes, he admitted the drawbacks to this policy. "The misfortune of the present state of affairs is this," he wrote. "Each step we take for our own security is a blow against the regular sepoy. He feels this, and on his side takes a further step, and so we go on, until we disband or destroy them, or they mutiny and kill their officers." To Lord Canning he expressed the belief that there was not "a single regiment of the line in the Bengal Presidency, with the exception of the 66th¹

¹ It will be remembered that Sir Charles Napier had brought this Gurkha battalion into the line, and granted them the colours and name of a regular regiment that had misbehaved.

(Gurkhas) who will not desert us." "*What we should avoid,*" he warned General Anson, "*is isolation, and the commanders of stations each looking to his own charge, and not to the general weal.* Many will, I fear, counsel delay and caution, but such a policy must prove ruinous."¹

As soon as he heard of the outbreak at Meerut, General Reed, the senior officer in the Punjab, held a council of war at Peshawar to consider a proposal, made by Nicholson and Edwardes, for the formation of a lightly-equipped movable column of English and Punjabi troops, "to move on any point and crush rebellion and mutiny." A telegram from Lawrence to Edwardes (whom he called his "Counsellor") expressed warm approval of the proposal. General Reed, Brigadier Cotton, Colonels Neville Chamberlain and Edwardes, Major John Nicholson, Captain Wright, and Lieutenant Frederick Roberts,² were present, and opinion was unanimous in favour of the scheme. This point settled, those staunch friends Edwardes and Nicholson slyly prepared the way for the adoption of a plan upon

¹ Bosworth-Smith, vol. i. p. 489.

² Lord Roberts, who was then on Neville Chamberlain's staff, and who was much younger than the other officers present, has related an interesting sequel to this conference. Later in the day Nicholson, finding that their plans had become known, called upon him and told him, "much to my disgust, that it was thought I might perhaps have been guilty of the indiscretion of divulging them. I was very angry for I had appreciated as much as any one the immense importance of keeping the decisions arrived at perfectly secret; and I could not help showing something of the indignation I felt at its having been thought possible that I could betray the confidence reposed in me." They then went to the telegraph office together. "The signaller was a mere boy, and Nicholson's imposing presence and austere manner were quite too much for him; he was completely cowed, and, after a few hesitating denials, he admitted having satisfied the curiosity of a friend. . . . This was enough, and I was cleared. The result to me of this unpleasant incident was a delightful increase of intimacy with the man for whom above all others I had the greatest admiration and the most profound respect. As if to make up for his momentary injustice, Nicholson was kinder to me than ever, and I felt I had gained in him a firm and constant friend."—*Forty-One Years in India*, vol. i. pp. 71-72.

which they had agreed, but which could not be openly explained. Their respect for General Reed could by no means be interpreted as blind admiration of his genius. He was merely a respectable soldier of a type common in the Company's army where seniority alone had any claim to the higher posts, and they doubted his fitness to cope with a situation that would tax the resource of a Wellington.

The quick insight of these two most famous of "the wardens of the marches" had already warned them of the obstacles that would surely be placed in the way of their chief at Rawul Pindi by the conscientious but slower mind of the general, who would be able to issue his orders from Lahore or Peshawar, or wherever he might be, without consulting Lawrence. They knew that the least hint of divided counsels would be hailed by the natives as a further proof that the English were *lachar* (helpless), that their star had set; for, in native opinion, the chief source of English strength arises from the perfect loyalty of the parts to the whole, the certainty that when he who is in authority gives an order his subordinates will obey. Neither Edwardes nor Nicholson could always see eye to eye with John Lawrence, but their trust in him was absolute, and they wished him to be supreme in military as well as in civil affairs. They therefore manœuvred the general with tactful suggestions so successfully that Reed proposed to make Rawul Pindi his headquarters, that he and the Chief Commissioner might be in constant communication. This was what the conspirators had played for, and they applauded the decision; and though General Reed never laid claim to be a brilliant soldier he gave proofs of strong common-sense—paradoxical term for so rare a quality—and a generous mind. Recognising that Lawrence was the better fitted to steer the boat he cheerfully subordinated himself and his office to the will of the civilian.

A few days later Reed and Chamberlain (who had been

given the command of the Movable Column) were summoned by Sir John to a conference at Rawul Pindi. Lieutenant Roberts was present for the purpose of drafting and copying the letters and telegrams.

¹ "I thus learned everything that was happening in the Punjab and became aware of the magnitude of the crisis through which we were passing. This enabled me to appreciate the tremendous efforts required to cope with the danger, and to understand that the fate of Delhi and the lives of our countrymen and countrywomen in Upper India depended upon the action taken by the authorities in the Punjab. I realised that Sir John Lawrence thought of every detail, and how correct was his judgment as to which of his subordinates could, or could not, be trusted."

Nowhere was the gravity of the situation and the extent of the evil more justly appreciated than at Rawul Pindi, but in no other place was such optimism to be found. As they discussed the details of their plans, the grand confidence of the chief inspired and stimulated his colleagues, and the boyish spirit of Herbert Edwardes would break out, again and again, in some humorous sally or comical suggestion. A rumour had reached them to the effect that General Anson, instead of pushing forward to Delhi, contemplated entrenching his troops at Amballa. Anson was a noted authority on whist, and Edwardes suggested a message that he would appreciate. The idea appealed to the Irish nature of the chief and he sanctioned the despatch of the pithy telegram, "Clubs are trumps, not spades."

It was well for John Lawrence at this time that he liked hard work and had trained himself to persevere in the face of depression, weariness, and pain. When the call came he was on his way to the hills, an invalid for whom rest and change were necessary; he was also suffering

¹ *Forty-One Years in India*, vol. i. p. 107.

greatly from neuralgia, and altogether the conditions were sufficient to have overwhelmed a man of less heroic purpose. In the struggle that ensued the will was victorious and the body subjected, and, with the exception of his more intimate friends, no one guessed that the Chief Commissioner had other foes to conquer than those of the state, as his letters and telegraphic messages, gravid with good advice, clear and incisive, bold yet cautious, flew close upon each other's heels to the Commander-in-Chief, to his own assistants, and to the heads of provinces not under his control; and each of these letters displayed an insight and a tenacity of purpose which gave the reader confidence in his counsellor. His subordinates knew that he trusted them to act upon their own responsibility when necessary, but they were always conscious that he never relaxed his hold upon the reins. "I like issuing orders by telegraph," he said, "because they cannot give me their reasons, nor ask me for mine." "He was the biggest man I have ever known," said Daly of the Guides. "We used to call him 'King John' on the frontier."

When Daly passed through Rawul Pindi on his way to Delhi he found the Chief Commissioner "lying on his bed in terrible agony from tic. 'Ah!' he said to me, as I was leaving the room, 'you will, very likely, see my brother Henry before I do. He has a terrible job down there at Lucknow.' Throughout that afternoon a succession of gloomy telegrams had been coming in to Sir John, telling him that the Residency at Lucknow was beleaguered, and the whole country was 'up.' 'Tell him so and so,' said Sir John, and then came a string of very kindly messages. 'Ah, well!' he ended up pathetically, and I fancy that I can, even now, see his big burly body lying on the bed as he said it, 'Ah, well! Henry had a greater grip on men than I ever had!'"¹

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. pp. 4-6. Captain Daly had visited Sir

Unfortunately there was not a Corbett in command of every Punjab cantonment. The authorities at Amballa had been urged by Sir John to disarm their sepoy without delay, but they shrank from taking the plunge, and the pandies were allowed to escape to Delhi. Irresolution at Jalandar was the cause of a more serious misfortune, for there 3000 sepoy broke into open mutiny, and, after murdering some of their officers, they marched to Phillour, and brought out the sepoy regiment stationed in that town. The Europeans troops at Jalandar were not sent in pursuit, and the mutineers, after plundering and burning in and about the town of Ludhiana, marched towards Delhi. Young Ricketts, a civilian, tried to hold them with 250 Sikhs, but, receiving no support from the brigadier, he was compelled to let go.

The officials at Multan possessed in a marked degree those qualities whose absence at Jalandar had been so conspicuous. Though they had only sixty European artillerymen with whom to overawe no less than 3500 sepoy, they contrived—by carrying out tactfully Sir John's instructions—to prevent an outbreak; and the arrival of some Punjab Irregulars enabled Crawford Chamberlain to disarm the sepoy. The chief was greatly elated by this success and cheered by the unselfish and broad-minded co-operation of Bartle Frere, Commissioner of Sind, whose views were identical with his own. "When the head and heart are threatened," Frere wrote to him, "the extremities must take care of themselves." Frere was, in pursuance of this policy, not afraid to weaken his own province in order to help his neighbour, and he despatched a small European force up the Indus to Multan.

Henry in Lucknow a few weeks before this date. "He gave me many messages to his brother John, all of them kind ones. But he laid most stress of all on a reminder which I was to give him to be very gentle and considerate in dealing with the Sirdars. 'Ah, yes,' said John, when I gave him the message, 'that was always Henry's way.'"

Next to Lahore in political and military importance was the station of Peshawar, where four regiments of poorbeah infantry and one of cavalry were brigaded with three weak Queen's regiments and a few guns; and close at hand, at Nowshera, were two sepoy corps, the 55th Infantry and the 10th Irregular Cavalry. Thousands of armed tribesmen swarmed in the Peshawar Valley, waiting for the downfall of the British Raj, and eager to invite Dost Mohammed to snatch Peshawar from the hands of the infidel. " ' Why do you always ask so anxiously about Peshawur? ' " an English official at Amritsar asked of a loyal Sikh. " The sirdar did not at once reply, but, with much significance of manner, took up the end of his scarf, and began rolling it up from the corner between his finger and thumb. ' If Peshawur goes, the whole Punjab will be *rolled up* in rebellion *like this*. ' " ¹

Fortunately there were at the " Gate of India " three men of rare gifts, Edwardes, the Commissioner, Nicholson, his deputy, and Brigadier Cotton in command of the troops, who were found prepared to play their parts in one of the most dramatic episodes of the Mutiny. On the night of May 21, a messenger aroused Edwardes and Nicholson with the news that the 55th was in a state of mutiny at Nowshera and that the 10th Cavalry was wavering. A few moments later the two politicals stood by the bedside of the brigadier and a short consultation sufficed to determine the course of action. Before the sun had risen Cotton had assembled the commanding officers and given them orders to parade their men at once. The decision to disarm the sepoys was received with a bad grace by some of the officers, and these declared that they had not lost confidence in their men, and argued the danger to the border if its guardians were deprived of their weapons. But the three were not to be moved; four of the five regiments must be disarmed, and

¹ Cave-Browne's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 153.

the 21st (now the 1st Bengal Infantry), which had given evidence of a better spirit, should be exempted from the disgrace.

The sepoy fell in without suspicion and were suddenly brought face to face with the guns behind which stood the white regiments. The order was given and the sepoy, cowed and uncertain of their comrades' support, quietly laid down their muskets and sabres, and on the pile fell the swords and spurs of more than one English officer.

The effect on the frontier was magical. "As we rode down to the disarming," Colonel Edwardes wrote, "a very few chiefs and yeomen of the country attended us, and I remember, judging from their faces, that they came to see which way the tide would turn. As we rode back friends were as thick as summer flies, and levies began from that moment to come in." Previous attempts to enroll the tribesmen had failed, but now more offered than could be accepted.

"I look on the disarming of the four corps at Peshawur as a master stroke," Lawrence wrote to Edwardes. "We are doing well in every district—Becher famously." Major Becher was in charge of the Hazara hills in the extreme north, and his share in the event will presently be seen. The 55th Native Infantry, whose mutiny at Nowshera was to have been the signal for a rising at Peshawar, had taken to flight, and Nicholson "with a handful of horsemen hurled himself like a thunderbolt on the route of a thousand mutineers."¹ Among the hills of Swat he overtook them, and there was enacted the first act of the pitiful story of the 55th. The mutineers fought resolutely; but "Nicholson was there; his foot in the stirrup, his sword by his side, and a few trusty horsemen beside him," and 120 pandies were slain and more captured. The remainder escaped for a time and wandered among the

¹ Edwardes' Official Report.



A PATHAN.
SHÁHZÁDA SULTAN JÁN OF KOHAT.

inhospitable hills, mocked, abused, robbed, and stoned by the Mohammedan tribesmen. They turned towards the Hazara country, hoping to make their way through the defiles into Kashmir, where their co-religionist, Gulab Singh, was ruler. But Becher raised the tribes against the poorbeahs, hung on their flanks, harried them, and struck blow after blow.

The miserable remnant turned again and plunged deeper into the hated mountains until lost to sight. There a worse fate awaited them. The petty chiefs to whom they offered their services laughed them to scorn, stripped them of their clothes, defiled their caste, murdered them as caprice prompted. The few who survived were forcibly converted to the faith of Islam and sold into slavery. It was the first knock-down blow dealt to the mutineers, and the disciples of Henry Lawrence remembered the old days at the Lahore Residency, and rejoiced that the credit belonged to two of their brotherhood.

Edwardes and Cotton were both merciful men, but they firmly believed that a terrible example would in the end save much bloodshed, and the prisoners were sentenced to death. "The Native Army requires to be appalled," the former wrote to his chief. Nicholson spoke up for the few Punjabis of the corps, as he had reason to believe that they had been led away against their wills. "Spare the Sikhs and young recruits," said he. But Sir John, while agreeing that severity was necessary, held the opinion that more good would result if the natives were taught that their rulers were in no way driven to that severity by the promptings of revenge. He suggested to Cotton that the execution of one-third of the number would have equal effects as a deterrent, and advised him to select as victims the ringleaders and older soldiers, whose influence had carried away their juniors. Glad to be relieved of the responsibility, Cotton and Edwardes concurred, and forty

of the leaders were blown from the guns on the parade-ground at Peshawar.

The weakness of the little army before Delhi had become manifest to the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, and, early in June, he was forced to reconsider his disposition of the English troops in his province. He had underrated the difficulties and, especially, the spirit and vigour of the mutineers. "I still think that no real resistance at Delhi will be attempted," he had written to Anson. "... My impression is that, on the approach of our troops, the mutineers will either disperse or the people of the city rise and open their gates."¹ Had Hewitt promptly let loose the Carabineers and Horse Artillery after the Meerut sepoy's little resistance would probably have been encountered, but the inaction and seeming cowardice displayed at Meerut had dispelled the old traditions of British invincibility and had given the sepoy's confidence.

General Anson had died on the way down, and his successor, Sir Henry Barnard, had now camped within a few miles of the walls. His force consisted of 3000 Europeans with twenty-two small guns, and in Delhi were at least 30,000 soldiers and armed men, and each day brought its reinforcement. The ramparts of Delhi had recently been strengthened by Robert Napier and on the walls were mounted nearly two hundred guns of much heavier calibre than those of the British. In front of the English camp was the famous Delhi Ridge which overlooked the town and shielded the old cantonments from the Delhi guns, and so long as the enemy held this ridge no steps could be taken against the town.

Barnard had not a single native corps under his command and the general feeling in his camp was that none was to be trusted. On the afternoon of June 1 a body of dark-faced men was seen approaching; the *Alarm* sounded,

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. ii. p. 157.

and, believing that an attempt was being made to outflank them, the camp rushed to arms. Then the bugles blew again and the alarm subsided, as the word was passed from man to man that Reid's Gurkhas had come down from the hills ready to kill or be killed, to bite cartridges, or eat "bullock-bone flour," if such was the wish of their British officers.¹

The English soldiers rushed out to line the road and cheer the first loyal battalion, and as the little fellows were seen to be staggering from the effects of the heat and the long march, they took the Gurkhas by the arms and led them into camp. A few days later the battle of Badli-ka-Serai was fought, the Ridge was stormed, and the old cantonments regained; and the Gurkhas behaved so grandly that they were given the post of honour on the Ridge, the outpost house of Hindu Rao, on whose possession depended the safety of the camp.

"Send down the Gurkhas from the hills," Sir Henry had telegraphed. "We are pushing on the Guides," wrote Sir John, and on the day after the victory of Badli-ka-Serai the camp again turned out to welcome a second loyal corps, the Guides Cavalry and Infantry, who had made the most wonderful march in Indian annals. The Guides Infantry was posted with the Gurkhas and, side by side, these two corps made the land ring with their renown.²

¹ Major Reid has recorded that whilst he was embarking his Gurkhas on the canal several men of the sappers came from Meerut and entered into communication with them. "I took no notice at first," he adds, "but as soon as they moved on, I called up a couple of my men and asked them what the sappers had said to them. One little fellow replied, 'They wanted to know if we were going to Meerut to eat the *ottah* sent up especially for the Gurkhas by the Governor-General; that the *ottah* at Meerut was nothing but ground bullocks' bones.' 'And what was your reply?' I asked. 'I said,' was the answer, 'the regiment was going wherever it was ordered—we obey the bugle-call.'"—*The Sepoy War*, vol. ii. p. 177.

² As Hindu Rao's house was well within range of the big guns of the Mori Bastion, and was, moreover, the object of twenty-six

The arrival of the Guides had a political as well as a military aspect, as the mere fact that the "crack corps" of the Punjab was fighting on the British side added prestige to the cause.

The Ridge had been gained, but the city lay before them vast and strong and confident, without a weak place in its armour, and Barnard's force realised that they were to be in every sense the besieged and not the besiegers. They had no guns that would make the least impression on Napier's defences; sickness was thinning their ranks, and Sir Henry Barnard was one of the earliest victims. Hardly a day passed without its assault upon the Gurkha picket; hardly an hour in which the big guns of the Mori Bastion did not sweep the outposts on the Ridge; for nowhere did the pandies fight so staunchly as at Delhi. Two days after the battle of Badli-ka-Serai the Rohtak sepoy's augmented the rebel garrison, and presently the mutineers poured in by hundreds from Jalandar, Bareilly, Nasirabad, and Neemuch. The news arrived that Havelock had his hands full and no hope of aid from that quarter might be entertained. The Punjab, whence alone reinforcements could be sent, was now almost denuded of trustworthy troops, and Edwardes, Nicholson, and Cotton were beseeching their chief to send no more, lest the weakness of their rulers should prove too strong temptation for the ambitious warriors of the Khalsa. "Anchor, Hardy, Anchor!" Edwardes wrote to him. Delhi is not India; let it wait until the China Force arrives. If you let the Punjab go all India is lost.

But Lawrence was not convinced. If we weaken the

distinct assaults (one lasting a day and a night), it is hardly surprising that very few of either Guides or Gurkhas returned to their homes. On the day of the storming of Delhi barely one hundred men of Reid's corps were reported fit for duty, but hearing what was toward ninety-five wounded Gurkhas crawled out of hospital and joined their officers.

Punjab it *may* be fatal, he replied, but if a disaster happens to the Delhi Force all is indeed lost. In the first case ruin is probable; in the second, certain. There is only one source whence European aid can be sent to Delhi. The Peshawar garrison includes some three thousand white troops, who are gradually being slain by the climate. Dost Mohammed desires Peshawar; he is being urged to snatch it from us while we are weak. Let us then make him a present of the valley, and so secure his friendship, and withdraw Europeans and irregulars across the Indus, where half of them will be sufficient to guard the new frontier, and the rest can go to Delhi.

Here John Lawrence stood alone, right or wrong, a grand figure, daring to run counter to opinion both popular and expert; not afraid to take the responsibility for a policy that seemed to smack of cowardice, a policy that might be—and was—quoted in after years as an instance of his lack of an infallibility to which he made no claim. Cotton and Nicholson, whose opinions he greatly valued, were as determined as Edwardes in their opposition, and even his own secretary, Major James, recorded a strongly-worded memorandum against his views. He stood alone, but unshaken.

“You know on what a nest of devils we stand,” Edwardes wrote to him. “Once take our foot up and we shall be stung to death;” and again, “Peshawur is the anchor of the Punjab, and if you take it up the whole ship will drift to sea.” He and his colleagues declared emphatically that the Punjab would treat the abandonment of Peshawar as an admission that even John Lawrence knew that he was beaten, and then the game would indeed be up; and the Afghans, instead of displaying gratitude, would regard it as a sign that they might safely help themselves to more.

“The Punjab Irregular Force,” said Cotton, its com-

manding officer, "no longer respecting our power, will, in all likelihood, turn against us. . . . I earnestly implore of you, my dear Sir John, to hold to our position on this frontier." "Give up every place but Peshawur, Lahore, and Multan," said Nicholson with equal emphasis. The Lumsdens, who were in Kandahar, sent word that the amir had already the utmost difficulty in keeping his subjects in hand. A retreat across the Indus would send the Afghans swarming through the passes, firmly convinced that "The good old days are back—let us go to war!"

The Chief Commissioner deliberately weighed the arguments against him, and was not turned from his purpose. He admitted the force of the objections, agreed that the step he proposed was fraught with peril, that Dost Mohammed and the Punjabis of all classes would regard it as a sign of weakness, of which they might try to take advantage. But he did not waver in his conviction that the danger of disaster to the Delhi force was greater still. If a large portion of the Peshawar garrison and the Frontier Force could be released to swell the army before Delhi that town might quickly fall, and the effect of such a triumph would outweigh the temporary loss of prestige incurred by the abandonment of Peshawar.

Not even John Lawrence could cede territory without the consent of the Governor-General. He placed before Lord Canning his reasons for contemplating a measure so reactionary and asked for one line in reply—either "Hold on to Peshawar to the last," or "You may act as may appear expedient in regard to Peshawar." The Governor-General was of the same opinion as Edwardes and Nicholson and he sent the "Hold on" telegram, but, as it had to travel *via* Madras and Bombay the danger was over before its arrival.

In this one proposal the chief had not the support of his best officers, and the balance of opinion has been against

him. On the other hand, Edwardes was the first to admit that though Sir John Lawrence had proposed to abandon Peshawar, he it was who, by sending down regiment after regiment to Delhi, when every one declared that not another man could be spared, had saved Peshawar and Delhi and the Indian Empire.

Sir John was asked at a later date to explain the distinctive features of the Punjab system that had proved so successful. He answered that it was the *men* that had done so well, not the system. And now, in June, came the call from Delhi not only for the troops of the Punjab, but also for his most trusted lieutenants. The Adjutant-General of the Delhi force had died, and as the post was one that no ordinary man could fill Lawrence offered either of his two best soldiers. They might have Neville Chamberlain or Nicholson, but on one condition, that, should the former be taken from the Punjab, Nicholson, though only a regimental captain, must have command of the Movable Column, and must be given the rank of Brigadier-General so that into whatever station he might enter he would still be senior officer. The terms were accepted; Chamberlain went to Delhi, and Nicholson took his place.

"I know you recommended it on public grounds," the latter wrote to his chief, "but I do not feel the less obliged to you. . . . I have dismissed old grievances (whether real or imaginary) from my mind, and, as far as I am concerned, bygones are bygones. In return, I would ask you not to judge me over-hastily or hardly."¹

For two months John Nicholson retained his independent command, and the Movable Column justified its name as he swept the Punjab with it, and flung it from point to point wherever the pandies showed their heads. His office at Peshawar was given to Major James, who had not forfeited his chief's good opinion because he had dared

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 11.

to oppose him,¹ and Mr. Brandreth was appointed "acting" secretary. "Well, Brandreth," said Sir John, "you are come to be my Secretary, are you? You must be reticent, remember, all Secretaries must be. But you need not be so reticent as James, for he won't tell even me!"²

While Nicholson's column was operating in the Manjha the spread of disaffection reached Rawul Pindi, and the thoroughness with which the Chief Commissioner had cleared the province of trustworthy troops was brought home to him. The poorbeahs at Rawul Pindi were comrades of those at Jhelum and Sialkot, stations about sixty and one hundred miles to the south-east, and a lead given at any of the three stations would probably be followed by the others. In the beginning of July Sir John gave instructions to disarm, and at the Rawul Pindi parade he rode forward to address the sepoy, and in so doing placed himself between them and the gunners, who, port-fires in hand, had their orders to blow away the poorbeahs on the first sign of resistance or flight. Before he could speak, the accidental discharge of a carbine sent the sepoy racing for their lines where they might hope to make a stand. Happily the gunners were not carried away by the excitement; they held their hands and allowed the sepoy to gain the shelter, "but Lawrence at once galloped after them, and, regardless of the eagerness with which they were all loading around them, called to them to listen and not to cause their own destruction. He thought nothing of his own peril in his anxiety to save them; and with Colonel Barstow's aid, he was successful."³

At Jhelum the Chief Commissioner's instructions were disregarded, with the result that the sepoy broke loose,

¹ Taylor, the engineer, has said that though Lawrence was a "hard taskmaster," he would "take back plain speaking" from his assistants.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 12.

³ Mr. Brandreth, quoted by Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 36.

and gave the signal to Sialkot, a station that contained no European troops. The poorbeah infantry allowed their officers to escape, but the cavalry troopers committed many murders, sacked the station, captured a gun, and, with the infantry, set off to Delhi, firmly convinced that the British were indeed *lachar*.

But these Sialkot regiments had not reckoned with Nicholson, who heard of the murders as he returned from one of his daurs¹ in the neighbourhood of Amritsar, one hundred miles from Sialkot. It was the hottest time of the year, and as the Europeans of the Movable Column had already been hard-worked, he requisitioned for their use every light vehicle and every horse upon which he could lay hands, and dashed towards the Ravi to cut them off. The pandies knew how far away were the nearest English troops, and, putting their trust in the July sun, they had no fear of infantry. Nicholson struck them just after they had crossed the Ravi. Though the sepoy fought pluckily, they were driven back towards the river and penned on an island in mid-stream, where they remained for three days until Nicholson had collected boats. He then embarked a portion of his force, and, at their head, went straight for the gun which the pandies had turned upon him. In command was a big sepoy, whom Nicholson cut clean in two with one mighty stroke; and, a few moments later, the Sialkot regiments had ceased to exist.

This tragedy was cited to the Governor-General by Sir John as an instance of what could be done by a resolute commander. The generals that had allowed the sepoy to escape at Meerut, Jalandar, and elsewhere would never have dreamed of the attempt; others, more energetic, might have considered its feasibility and have judged that the bare possibility of exchanging a few shots with the mutineers, and so hastening their flight, could not be

¹ Minor expeditions.

weighed against the ill-effects of the exposure of the Europeans to the sun. But Nicholson determined to destroy them, and he did it completely, and the moral effect was of greater benefit than the mere diminution of the sepoy ranks by a thousand men. The news of the wonderful pursuit flew through the Punjab, strong men discussed that feat of swordsmanship, and while those natives who had chosen the British side felt new strength and confidence, the waverers felt less inclined to pit themselves against such a man; and the mutineers, dreading him as a demon, were already half-beaten whenever he opposed them. An incident of the pursuit is characteristic of the man.¹ After marching thirty miles the column reached a grove and the officers begged that their men might rest beneath the shade for an hour or two, and, as many had been struck down by the sun, the general reluctantly consented. Presently one English soldier, and then another, looked round for the young leader and found him "in the full glare of the sun, sitting bolt upright upon his horse, and perfectly motionless," in "silent protest." A whisper passed down the outstretched ranks, and the men rose and resumed the march, worthy of their leader.

But in spite of the exertions of the ever-victorious Movable Column the Punjab was uneasy, for at the end of July the re-capture of Delhi seemed more remote than ever. Sir John had moved to Lahore, and soon after his arrival one of the disarmed regiments there had bolted, after cutting its colonel to pieces; the example had been followed at Peshawar (where the European garrison was reduced by sickness to one-third its nominal strength) and at other places, and, though swift punishment had overtaken the mutineers,² these risings were symptoms that the strain

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 42.

² The 51st "made a rush on the arms of the new Sikh corps whilst

could not much longer be borne. General Reed had succeeded Sir Henry Barnard in command of the Delhi force, and when he, its third commander, was struck down by illness, General Wilson took his place. The rebel numbers were growing in far greater proportion than were the British, who, however, still hung on with a bulldog tenacity that had its effect in keeping the Sikhs quiet; but Wilson was ill and Chamberlain wounded, there was talk of retiring, and the Punjab quivered. To spare another man from the province was impossible! And Sir John Lawrence accomplished the impossible. He sent off more than three thousand—no less a reinforcement than the Movable Column, and John Nicholson himself to lead it to other and greater victories. Not content with thus robbing his province of the force that had overawed five times its number, Sir John at the same time began to prepare at Ferozepore a siege-train capable of battering down the walls of Delhi.

Khalsa was at dinner. Khalsa dropped his curry and went in for victory," and there was no longer any 51st Native Infantry.—*Edwardes's Letter to the Chief Commissioner.*

CHAPTER XXIII

(May-July 1857)

SIEGE OF LUCKNOW AND DEATH OF HENRY LAWRENCE

Henry Lawrence prepared—He wins over a Number of Sepoys—
Failure of the Rebel Plans—A Headstrong Subordinate—The
Cawnpore Massacre—Chinhut—Death of Henry Lawrence.

THE news from Meerut and Delhi had reached Lucknow and, for two or three days, anticipation of its comet-train of consequences had been filling the minds of the inhabitants of the Oudh capital with hope or consternation before Sir Henry Lawrence made a move. He refused to precipitate a crisis until he was ready to deal with it. But on the morning of May 17 the mutinously-inclined awoke to the fact that they had been forestalled, and that while they intrigued the situation in Lucknow had quietly been changed. "An entirely new and effective disposition of the troops" had been made; the bridges over the Gumti connecting the cantonments and the city were under the control of the 32nd Foot; the Muchi Bawn, a huge building close to the Chief Commissioner's Headquarters, had been garrisoned, and the European women and children were safe within the Residency.

"In the cantonment where I reside," Sir Henry wrote to Lord Canning, "the 270 or so men of H.M.'s 32nd with 8 guns, could at any time knock to pieces the four native regiments." Although the Residency was in no immediate danger he caused all houses in its neighbourhood that might serve to shelter assailants to be destroyed, and the owners were given full compensation, but neither

mosque nor temple would he permit to be touched. "Spare the holy places," was his reply, when urged to complete the measures for the Residency's defence, though none knew better than he the use to which such buildings would be put in case of an assault upon his posts. He then issued the following memorandum to his officers:—

"Time is everything just now. Time, firmness, promptness, conciliation, and prudence; every officer, each individual European, high and low, may at this crisis prove most useful or even dangerous. A firm and cheerful aspect must be maintained; there must be no bustle, no appearance of alarm, still less of panic; but at the same time there must be the utmost watchfulness and promptness; everywhere the first germ of insurrection must be put down instantly. Ten men may in an hour quell a row which, after a day's delay, may take weeks to put down. I wish this point to be well understood. . . ."¹

He also emphasised the importance of committing the well-disposed talukdars, zemindars, and sepoy to the side of the Government, of helping to overcome the irresolution of those who were "sitting upon the fence" and influence them towards a right decision. The wavering sepoy, with no animus against the English and no sense of personal wrong over which to brood, would still throw in his lot with the majority if left to decide for himself, unaided; and a hatred of the alien would develop with time and the sense of antagonism between black and white. But let the waverers be given some responsibility, duly yet not obviously safe-guarded; let them be separated, unostentatiously and, if possible, upon some plausible pretext, from the disaffected, and quartered with comrades whose steadiness might reasonably be counted upon, and on the test-day their environment would affect their actions and might incline them duty-wards. He could understand

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 324.

and make allowance for the hesitation, the inclination swaying from one side to the other, could sympathise with the helpless groping among conflicting sentiments, emotions, and prejudices, and one of the elements of his influence—hardly less potent indeed than his personal magnetism—was his ability to divine the exact degree of trust that might safely be placed in men in order to gain their confidence, avoiding, on the one hand, the danger of giving what would be misused, and, on the other, by withholding, of arousing resentment of the implied suspicion. By assuming with the undecided that loyalty and devotion to duty would be forthcoming, he created those virtues in the minds of men accustomed to obey—bred to subordinate rôles. When reason was thrust impatiently aside unable to obtain a hearing, when even immediate interests were being disregarded, when Fear brought forth a desperate courage, the assumption that a certain line of conduct was expected would prevail when argument would fail. Other men had greater faith in their sepoy, and showed it, and perished; others had less and failed or partially succeeded according to the soundness of the measures taken to ward the blow, and to the extent of their resources. But none made such good use of waverers as he did of those whose defection would have been certain had not his knowledge of human nature, his sympathy with—and yet mastery over—the weak in purpose, enabled him to show just enough belief in the sepoy to make him wish to justify the confidence, and yet not enough for him to take advantage of. He took the measure of his instruments and by relying upon them made them the more fit to be relied upon. Nothing was too trivial for his observation, and in the memorandum already quoted he showed his knowledge of the chieftains, native officers, and common sepoy into whose blood the poison had not yet worked its way by naming one who “can hit a bottle at a hundred yards,”

and referring to others who owned double-barrelled guns and were good shots. Such were the men he wished his officers to win over.

His mastery of detail, his activity, the thoroughness of his personal inspection, amazed those who knew how feeble was his frame. "Night and day seemed all the same to him," said one of the besieged. He spent most of his time in the native cantonment, where he gained the esteem of the sepoy, and in her diary of the siege Lady Inglis tells how the Europeans looked up to him. During the evening service on Sunday, May 24—a favourite time for the outbreak of mutiny—the boom of cannon was heard, and for a moment the congregation was thrown into a state of panic, but "Sir Henry did not even turn his head, so we felt quite re-assured." The reports merely announced the end of the Ramazan Fast.

But he trusted not in himself and his measures of precaution. "Often was he found upon his knees, by those who entered his room to convey information or to solicit instruction."¹

On May 30 a sepoy of the 13th Native Infantry warned Captain Wilson, the Deputy-Adjutant-General, that a rising had been planned for that evening, and Sir Henry's spirit rose with the nearness of danger so that disease and the burden of years fell from him. "We are pretty jolly," he wrote to Mr. Raikes that day, and he refused to evince anxiety by abandoning a dinner-party at the Residency. "I sat at the bottom of the table," wrote Captain Wilson,² "and when the 9 p.m. gun was fired, Sir Henry said with a laugh, 'Wilson, your friends are not punctual.'" Almost as he spoke the rattle of musketry was heard from the direction of the cantonments. The chief had formed his plans.

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. iii. p. 494.

² *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 332.

“The horses were at once ordered,” says Captain Wilson, “and Sir Henry stood outside in the moonlight, on the steps of the Residency, impatiently awaiting his horse. There was a guard of a native officer and sixty sepoy on duty in the Residency, and immediately on the alarm the native officer had drawn them up in line about thirty yards distant, directly in front of where Sir Henry Lawrence stood. And now the soobahdar came to me, and, saluting, said, ‘Am I to load?’ I turned to Sir Henry, and repeated the question; he said, ‘Oh, yes, let him load.’ The order was at once given, and the ramrods fell with that peculiar dull sound on the leaden bullets. I believe Sir Henry was the only man of all that group whose heart did not beat the quicker for it. But he, as the men brought up their muskets with the tubes levelled directly against us, cried out, ‘I am going to drive those scoundrels out of cantonment: take care while I am away that you all remain at your posts, and allow no one to do any damage here, or enter my house, else when I return I will hang you.’ . . . The guard remained steadily at its post, and with the bungalows blazing and shots firing all round, they allowed no one to enter the house, and the residence of Sir Henry was the only one that was not either pillaged or burnt.”

With two guns and a company of the European infantry he crossed the Gumti and blocked the roads leading from the cantonment to the city. Deceived by the apparent unpreparedness of the English—as evidenced by the dinner-party—no plot had been formed for a simultaneous rising in city and cantonment. The budmashes (bad characters) were awaiting the triumphant entry of the mutineers, and the promptness with which the disciplined sepoy had been cut off from the rabble of the town had disconcerted them all. Sir Henry had notified the English officers of the native regiments that on the first symptom

of the outbreak those sepoy who had not committed themselves to rebellion should be separated from the actively disloyal before they should have time to make up their minds, and now a strong body of faithful poorbeahs from the cantonment marched to join the Chief Commissioner by the bridge he was guarding. They brought the news that Brigadier Handscombe, the officer in command of the cantonment, had been killed by a stray shot, and that Lieutenant Grant of the 71st and Cornet Raleigh of the 7th Cavalry had been murdered. Three hundred of these loyal sepoy—less than five hundred in all—belonged to the 13th Bengal Native Infantry, a corps already marked by Lawrence as the most likely to prove true, and they brought with them their colours and treasure-chest.

Next morning, Sunday, May 31, Lawrence with the 32nd Foot and some of the loyal dark-faces chased and captured a number of the rebels. The heat was too fierce for sustained pursuit, and in view of the exhaustion of the Europeans he ordered the troops to retire to their quarters. Attended only by his aide-de-camp he followed on the heels of the mutineers until he reached a police-post where he was able to obtain materials for a letter and a messenger to gallop with it to Sitapur to warn the Commissioner of the danger threatening his station. The warning arrived too late; the sepoy of Sitapur had already risen.

In the course of the day the budmashes and a large number of the nawab's disbanded troops headed an insurrection in the city, but the rising was suppressed by the 32nd, the loyal sepoy, and the native police. Prevented by Lawrence's night-move from joining forces with the regulars the rabble had little stomach for the fight.

"We are now positively better than we were," Sir Henry wrote to Lord Canning next day. "We now know our friends and enemies."

A number of the Lucknow mutineers made straight for

Delhi, but some carried the torch of rebellion through the villages of Oudh, and the sepoy regiments in other parts of the province rose in rebellion.

That so large a number of poorbeahs had stood the fire-test was one of the most encouraging features of the situation. The summer heat would soon have rendered the Europeans unfit to carry out the many harassing duties which could now be undertaken by the loyal sepoys, and the Lucknow officers praised their chief to whose influences and tact the result was due. But the second in command took a different view.

Mr. Gubbins was happy only in opposition, and Kaye has said that, lacking other opponent, Martin would have quarrelled with Gubbins, and Gubbins with Martin. Indomitably brave, fiercely energetic, he chafed at Sir Henry's cautious methods, scoffed at the idea that 700 British soldiers could not hold their own without poorbeah aid, was all for aggressive measures and for taking risks out of proportion to the chances of success. Lawrence, after watching his Financial Commissioner ride straight at the sepoy mob on May 31, had declared to Lord Canning that Gubbins was a hero; and no man was better fitted to lead a forlorn hope, nor more unsuited to cope with a situation requiring infinite tact, foresight, and patience. Though despising the loyalty professed and demonstrated by the regular sepoys, the civilian was prepared to place reliance upon the Oudh Irregulars, on whom Sir Henry was loth to count. The persistent opposition of the headstrong subordinate, his continual urging of impossible aggressive measures, and his evident desire to supersede his chief, gradually wore down the frail health. Conscious that he might soon succumb, and dreading a catastrophe, Sir Henry determined to prevent Mr. Gubbins from becoming his successor, and on June 4 he telegraphed to the Governor-General:

“ If anything happens to me during present disturbances, I earnestly recommend that Major Banks succeed me as Chief Commissioner, and Colonel Inglis in command of the troops, until better times arrive. This is no time for punctilio as regards seniority. They are the right men, in fact the only men for the places.”

Five days later the Chief Commissioner was so ill that the doctors ordered him to abstain from work. He obeyed and appointed a provisional council, consisting of Mr. Gubbins, Mr. Ommaney, Colonel Inglis, and Majors Banks and Anderson, but though the three soldiers pinned their faith to Sir Henry, so great was Mr. Gubbins' force of character that he led the council. He seized the chance of dismissing the sepoy, disarmed, to their homes, and had partially carried out the scheme when the invalid rose from his bed, dissolved the council, returned their arms to the majority of the sepoy, and increased their numbers by inviting pensioners of the Company's army to join the ranks.

So great was Sir Henry's prestige that he had little difficulty in amassing good stores of provisions from many of the principal talukdars and in obtaining from the same source prompt intelligence of the rebel movements. Nor were advice and suggestions on the part of natives wanting. One well-meaning Brahman approached Sir Henry with the serious proposal that “ a number of monkeys should be procured, and that they should be kept at the Residency, and attended and fed by high-caste Brahmans, and that this measure would not only be the means of propitiating all the Hindoo deities in our favour, but that it would also tend to make the British rule in India again popular with the natives. Sir Henry put on his hat, and, rising, said in the courteous tone for which he was ever remarkable: ‘ Your advice, my friend, is good. Come with me, and I will show you my monkeys.’ And, leading the way, he

walked into a newly-completed battery, and, laying his hand on the 18-pounder gun which occupied it, observed: 'See here is one of my monkeys; *that*,' indicating a pile of shot, 'is his food; and this' (pointing to a sentry of the 32nd Foot) 'is the man who feeds them. There! go and tell your friends of *my* monkeys.'"¹

He found time to send his brother George advice with respect to the policy to be maintained in Rajputana,² and his correspondence of this period shows his keen interest in the affairs of the Punjab and other provinces, and that he did not make the mistake of supposing that his charge was the one place on which attention should be concentrated.

To Mr. Colvin, at Agra, he wrote on June 12, that "Mr. Gubbins has been almost insubordinately urgent on me to disband these remnants. . . . He is a gallant, energetic, clever fellow, but sees only through his own vista, and is therefore sometimes troublesome." To Lord Canning: "The conduct of the Europeans is beautiful. By God's help we can hold our own for a month, but there should be no delay in sending succour."

To General Wheeler, at Cawnpore, who had appealed for help, he was compelled by the presence of the women and children in Lucknow to reply that his chief officers "are unanimous in thinking that with the enemy's command of the river, we could not possibly get a single man into your intrenchment. I need not say that I deeply lament being obliged to concur in this opinion. . . . Mr. Gubbins, who does not understand the difficulties of the most

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 346-347.

² That the Rajput princes took no part in the rebellion was without doubt due to Sir Henry's success in allaying their fears. He was also cheered by the news that the Native States, in whose cause he had suffered so much, were acting—in Canning's own words—as "breakwaters to the storm, which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave."

difficult of military operations, the passage of a river in the face of an enemy, is led away by generous enthusiasm to desire impossibilities. I write not only my own opinion, but that of many ready to risk their lives to rescue you. God grant you His protection."

His heart was wrung by a note from Wheeler on the 24th, describing the pitiable state of the Europeans at Cawnpore, and, attempting to reply in a tone of encouragement, he urged him not to "accept any terms from the enemy, as I much fear treachery. You cannot rely on the Nana's promises. *Il a tué beaucoup de prisonniers.*" He sent a message to inform Havelock of Wheeler's extremity, and wrote to Mr. Colvin that "we have no fear except for Wheeler, for supplying whom I am making every exertion."

But the next day, June 28, brought the news of the tragedy; Wheeler had trusted the Mahratta.

Immediately after the Cawnpore massacre the rebels began to concentrate against Lucknow, and, rather than submit tamely to an investment, Sir Henry resolved to take a great risk. His letter to Havelock tells the result.

MY DEAR HAVELock,—This morning we went out eight miles to Chinhut to meet the enemy, and we were defeated, and lost five guns through the misconduct chiefly of our Native Artillery, many of whom deserted. The enemy have followed us up, and we have now been besieged for four hours, and shall probably to-night be surrounded. The enemy are very bold, and our Europeans very low. I look on our position now as ten times as bad as it was yesterday; indeed, it is very critical. We shall be obliged to concentrate *if we are able*. We shall have to abandon much supplies, and to blow up much powder. Unless we are relieved quickly, say in ten or fifteen days, we shall hardly be able to maintain our position. We lost three officers killed this morning, and several wounded—Colonel Case, Captain Stephen, and Mr. Brackenbury.

"Sir Henry Lawrence has been blamed for this misfortune," wrote one of the defenders of Lucknow,¹ "and

¹ Colonel Wilson's narrative, *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 366.

as he commanded, the responsibility must rest on him. But none but those who were in his immediate confidence are aware of all the difficulties of his position. The whole city of Lucknow was wavering; hourly reports were brought in of the intended defection of our few native adherents. It was well known that the Cawnpore garrison had been destroyed. All the out-stations in Oude were gone. Our servants were deserting. Sir Henry felt that he must endeavour to take the initiative; and yet he was afraid to weaken the garrison too much, or venture too far away, lest he should endanger one or both of the positions we were holding. . . .”

The disaster was great, but the enterprise was not one foredoomed to failure. A soldier who never takes risks is rarely of much service to his country, and—so close lie failure and success—had the rations been served out to the Europeans, as ordered by Sir Henry, the effect of Chinhut might have been to have delayed the investment of the Residency, to have damped the ardour of the pandies throughout Oudh, and so have rendered Havelock's advance more easy—the objects he had in view. In the confusion his instructions had been disregarded, and, under the deadly rays of the midsummer sun, the Europeans, without their “coffee, biscuits, and rum,” were rapidly demoralised so that they could neither march nor fight. The mutineers had engaged reluctantly, assured of defeat, but observing the pitiable state of the 32nd, they joyously rose to the occasion, and charged upon their opponents with an ardour equalling their former prowess under British officers. Many of the irregular horse and artillery deserted to the rebels, two guns were purposely overturned and put out of action, the 32nd were swept away, and though the loyal sepoy regulars and the handful of European volunteer cavalry strove manfully to retrieve the day, they were compelled to retire, hopelessly defeated.

Sir Henry did all that man could do to turn disaster into victory, and, when all hope of this had fled, to save his retreating soldiers from annihilation, bluffing the triumphant rebels back from their prey with lighted portfire above an empty, useless gun. "Throughout that terrible day, during the conflict, and when all was lost, and retreat became all but a rout, and men were falling fast, he displayed the utmost calmness and decision; and as with his hat off, he sat on his horse on the Kokrail bridge, rallying our men for a last stand, himself a distinct mark for the enemy's skirmishers, he seemed to bear a charmed life."¹ He led the remnant of the force into the Residency and the enemy closed around them.

Hitherto the English had held three positions in Lucknow—the cantonment across the river, the Muchi Bawn, and the Residency. The cantonment was now lost to them and the reduced garrison was no longer strong enough to hold the Muchi Bawn. An emergency code of signalling between this palace and the Residency had been arranged, and, on July 1, Lawrence gave orders for the withdrawal of the troops at midnight, while he made a feint to cover the retirement, a most hazardous undertaking carried out with entire success. The famous siege of the Lucknow Residency² had begun.

On the day preceding the withdrawal of the Muchi Bawn garrison a shell had entered the room in which the Chief Commissioner was working and had burst harmlessly between him and his secretary. His friends implored him to occupy a less exposed portion of the building, but, as he had chosen the room because its position enabled him to overlook the operations, he laughingly made answer that "he did not believe the enemy had an artilleryman good

¹ Colonel Wilson's narrative.

² The term Residency here comprehends the official buildings in the neighbourhood of the Resident's house—practically the English quarter of the town.

enough to put another shell into that small room." Early next morning, July 2, he had retired to this room a few hours after the safe entry of the Muchi Bawn troops, and, being greatly exhausted, he lay on a couch attended by his nephew, George Lawrence, and by Captain Wilson. Wilson was submitting a manuscript to his chief, when¹ "the fatal shot came: a sheet of flame, a terrific report and shock, and dense darkness, is all I can describe. I fell down on the floor, and perhaps for a few seconds was quite stunned; and then got up, but could see nothing for the smoke and dust. Neither Sir Henry nor his nephew made any noise, and in great alarm I cried out, 'Sir Henry, are you hurt?' Twice I thus called out without any answer. The third time he said in a low tone, 'I am killed.' The punkah had come down, and the ceiling, and a great deal of the plaster, and the dust and smoke was so great that it was some minutes before I could see anything; but as it gradually cleared away, I saw the white coverlid of the bed on which Sir Henry was laid was crimson with his blood. Some soldiers of the 32nd now rushed in, and placed Sir Henry in a chair."

A fragment of the shell had struck the upper part of the left thigh, almost tearing off the leg. He was quickly removed to a less exposed room, and the doctor, in reply to the pressing and repeated question, "How long have I to live?" could give him hope of forty-eight hours only. The officers of the garrison gathered round the bedside to receive their beloved master's last instructions. He appointed Major Banks his successor to the Chief Commissionership and Colonel Inglis to the command of the troops, and while he lingered in pain, pity for the English women and children, exposed to so great danger, suffering, and privation, prevailed over every other sentiment. He had no commiseration to spare for himself.

¹ Wilson's narrative.

Even the despised native servants were remembered and rewarded and brought in to receive their master's blessing.

" . . . He also sent for all those," said his nephew, "whom he thought he had ever, though unintentionally, injured, or even spoken harshly to, and asked their forgiveness. His bed was surrounded by old friends and new friends, and there were few dry eyes there." " . . . Of himself," wrote the doctor who attended him,¹ "he spoke most affectingly and humbly, ignoring his own great merits, and dwelling on what he thought his own shortcomings."

His last injunctions to the garrison were: "No surrender! Let every man die at his post; but never make terms."²

"Reserve fire. Check all wall firing. Carefully register ammunition for guns and small arms in store. Carefully register daily expenditure as far as possible." "Entrench, entrench, entrench." He asked that on his tomb should be inscribed the simple epitaph: "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty," and he expressed the hope that the Government would take care of the Lawrence Asylums.

On the morning of July 4 he died, and when the sun had gone down he was buried in the Residency grounds; and as the soldiers filed into the room to bear the body to the grave, each man stepped forward and, lifting the

¹ *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii. p. 376.

² "Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post!" Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the best of the brave:

Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him—we laid him that night in his grave.

"Every man die at his post!" and there hail'd on our houses and halls Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from their cannon-balls, Death in our innermost chamber, and death at our slight barricade, Death while we stood with the musket, and death while we stoop't to the spade.

coverlet, reverently kissed the cold forehead of him whom all loved and honoured—the tribute he would most have prized.

Henry Lawrence was dead, and strong men wept when they heard the news. Englishmen who had never met him went about heavily, mourning as for a dear friend, and the grief of the loyal natives was hardly less real. "Of all men in India," wrote the Governor-General, "he is the one whose loss is least reparable at this moment," and "amongst those who have nobly perished in this protracted struggle, Sir Henry Lawrence will occupy the first place in the thoughts of his fellow-countrymen. . . . The name of Sir Henry Lawrence can never rise up without calling forth a tribute of honour and admiration from all who knew him."

"What a blow it is!" Edwardes wrote to his wife.¹ "What widespread sorrow it will bring! It is like a good king dying. It is wonderful what a number of hearts loved him, at home and here, black as well as white. You know what we of his old staff will feel about it. He was our master, friend, example, all in one; a father to us in the great earnest public life to which he led us forth. . . ."

"It would be selfish to wish it otherwise," the same disciple wrote to Nicholson; "for what a change for him, after his long battle of life, his restless strife for the benefit of others—the State, the army, the native Princes, the native people, the prisoners in gaol, the children of the English soldiery, and all that were poor and all that were down. . . . Fine, brave old fellow! he has fought his fight, and won his victory, and now let him lay his armour down and rest. . . . His last act at Lahore was to kneel down with his dear wife, and pray for the success of John's administration."

"If it please Providence that I live through this business,"

¹ *Memorials of Sir H. B. Edwardes*, vol. ii. p. 29.

Nicholson replied, "you must get me alongside of you again, and be my guide and help in endeavouring to follow his example; for I am so weak and unstable that I shall never do any good of myself. I should like to write you a long letter, but I cannot manage it. . . . God be with you, dear Edwardes."

"All men loved him," said Kaye,¹ "because he loved all men. . . . And many, perhaps, will say that they do not quite know why of all men, of whom they had ever read in Indian history, he seemed to be the flower; but that they cannot help feeling it." "Than his," wrote Colonel Malleeson,² who completed the great work that Kaye did not live to finish, "it is difficult to imagine a purer, a more unselfish, a more blameless, and at the same time a more useful life." ³"No Englishman who has been in India has ever influenced other men so much for good . . . nobody has ever been so beloved, nobody has ever deserved to be so beloved, as Sir Henry Lawrence."

A fortnight after the hero of Lucknow had been laid in his grave, the Home Government, on receipt of the news of the crisis, appointed Henry Lawrence Provisional Governor-General of India "on the death, resignation, or coming away of Viscount Canning," an honour that had never before been paid to an officer of the Company's army.

The triumphant story of the Defence of Lucknow is known to every one. "It was Henry Lawrence's foresight, humanly speaking," said one of the defenders,⁴ "that saved every one of the garrison. But for him I do not believe that one would have escaped." This judgment is confirmed by the most distinguished member of the army that broke through the investing forces and brought

¹ *The Sepoy War*, vol. iii. pp. 519-520.

² *The Indian Mutiny*, vol. i. p. 437.

³ Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 336.

⁴ *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. ii. p. 328.

out the heroic garrison.¹ "The contemplation of the defence of Lucknow, and the realisation of the noble qualities it called forth in the defenders, cannot but excite in the breast of every British man and woman, as it did in mine, feelings of pride and admiration. But what impressed me more than even the glorious defence was the foresight and ability of the man who made the defence possible."

The preservation of the English residents and garrison of Lucknow was the happy outcome of that "foresight and ability," but we must look beyond to gauge the far-reaching military importance of Sir Henry Lawrence's efficiency and promptness to act. Not only was the prestige of England upheld in the stronghold of the pandies, but an overwhelming concentration of the rebels at Delhi was made impossible. Had Lucknow been unprepared, a swarm of victory-flushed sepoys would have been let loose from Oudh, and the little army on the Delhi Ridge must have been swept away. The Punjab could not then have stood the strain.

Five years before Sir Henry Lawrence had left the Punjab for ever, believing that his work there was ended; but his last achievement was to co-operate with his brother in the crowning triumph of the province.

¹ Lord Roberts, *Forty-One Years in India*, vol. i. p. 349.

CHAPTER XXIV

(September 1857-December 1858)

JOHN LAWRENCE SAVES INDIA

Nicholson's Last Fight—Effect of the Capture of Delhi—John Lawrence raises the Khalsa to Life—He appeals for Mercy in the Hour of Victory—Edwardes' *Elimination of all Unchristian Principles* Memorandum.

"WE have sent every man we could spare—perhaps more," Sir John Lawrence wrote to Lord Canning on September 6. "We have raised for them Pioneers, Infantry, Cavalry. Nothing that we could think of has been wanting. Even the sand-bags for their batteries have been made up and sent down." The heavy siege-train from Ferozepore had reinforced Wilson's army, and its march down had given Nicholson the opportunity to win one of his most brilliant fights. Having heard that the Delhi rebels had despatched two large forces to waylay the siege-train, he had moved out swiftly with his irresistible column, and at Najafgarh had struck one of the heaviest blows of the war. "I wish I had the power of knighting you on the spot," wrote Sir John.

Richard Lawrence had brought into camp two thousand men from Kashmir, raised by Gulab Singh and sent down by his son and successor. "Dick's Rosebuds"—to quote his brother's term—were hardly "first-class fighting men," but their presence on the British side was evidence that the Kashmir raja, whose unerring instinct for his own interests had been notorious, had, before he died, decided to "put his money" on the English horse.

At the suggestion of Edwardes, the Chief Commissioner had raised from the ranks of the canal workmen a strong regiment of Mazbi Sikhs¹ to act as sappers and miners under Baird Smith and Alexander Taylor, and he had no difficulty in enrolling more than a thousand men. The Kuki-Kheyls, one of the most truculent Pathan tribes, actually brought to Edwardes the full amount of a murder-fine which they had refused to pay when the English power was still unshaken, and there were other unmistakable signs that the outlook was brightening, and that a feeling in favour of the English now prevailed, a feeling impalpable and elusive perhaps, but none the less of good omen.

Nicholson was known in the Delhi Field Force as "The Autocrat of all the Russias," but the name was used in no disapproving sense, for the hero-worshipping instincts of the soldiery were concentrated upon him. His presence there was worth far more than "the wing of a regiment," the value at which he had once been assessed by the Chief Commissioner, who was now in constant communication with him. Sir John knew the city intimately from the Delhi Gate to the Water Bastion, and as it was understood that Nicholson was to have command of the storming-columns, he placed his local knowledge at the service of the brigadier, who was too good a soldier to despise such aid, even from a civilian. "Should your Brigade go in at the Kashmir Gate," Lawrence wrote,² "recollect that when you once pass the Octagon inside, you come to an open space in which the church stands. In advance of this open ground are two streets which lead onwards into the town.

¹ The title *Mazbi* (Religious) Sikhs was granted by Govind Singh to an outcaste tribe that had rescued the corpse of his father, Teg Bahadur, from the Mohammedans. They are very proud of the concession, and, though of aboriginal descent, have proved themselves almost equal to the Jat Sikhs as fighting-men. Since 1857 the Punjab pioneer regiments have been largely recruited from this caste.

² *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. ii. pp. 104-105.

If you secure both houses, viz., Hamid Ali Khan's and Skinner's—you command both streets and are quite safe from a sudden attack, and in the open space I would counsel that you reform your men and get in your guns and advance with deliberation. After passing the old Residency, lately the College, you come to the old magazine and then over a bridge in the canal to the Palace. From the ground in front of the College and Magazine, which is higher than Selimghur, you could shell the Palace with great advantage, while, to the best of my recollection, guns from neither Selimghur nor the Palace could touch you. . . .

“But if the town holds out, and the mutineers occupy the houses, we should seize the Jumma Musjid and the other mosque in the Chandni Chouk, which will serve as a fortress for our troops. The Lahore Gate of the City leads down the Chandni Chouk to the Palace. It is some eighty feet wide. Secure this street and the Jumma Musjid, and the mutineers cannot maintain themselves.”

Nicholson's letters expressed much impatience and dissatisfaction with General Wilson's want of decision, and he even hinted at the possibility of a step too drastic to have been contemplated by any other man. This was no less than an appeal to the army to depose the commanding officer, but, happily, Wilson adopted in time the urgent advice of his engineers, with whose plans Nicholson was in accord. No longer hampered by the vacillation of their general, Baird Smith and Alexander Taylor pushed forward their siege-works, and constructed heavy batteries almost under the shadow of the Delhi walls. Brind and Tombs and their gunners seconded the exertions of the engineers, and on September 14, after a few days' bombardment, Delhi was stormed. The sepoys defended the town obstinately, and John Nicholson fell, mortally wounded, while rallying his men. Hard fighting continued for

several days, but on September 20 the British flag was seen above the Imperial Palace, and Delhi was won.

During the defence of the Ridge and the storming of Delhi many heroic deeds were recorded and still more passed unnoticed, but the credit for the victory which broke the back of the Mutiny belongs essentially to four men—to Sir John Lawrence, who had, from the first, brought all his rare energy to bear upon this consummation; to John Nicholson, the brilliant soldier and inspired leader of men; to Colonel Baird Smith, the engineer, who, while broken down in health, planned the operations that prepared the way for the assault; and to Lieutenant Taylor,¹ the executive engineer, who carried out the work so thoroughly—of whom Nicholson had said: “If I survive to-morrow, I will let all the world know that it was Alec Taylor who took Delhi.”

Mutiny reeled from the blow. As the loot from the Delhi palaces began to pass through their villages, the Punjabis, who had refused to credit the rumours, no longer doubted which cause to espouse. “All last night,” wrote Edwardes, “from *sunset* to *sunrise*, Peshawur was a blaze of brilliant lamps and fireworks. . . . Every single house, large or small, in every street and lane was a mass of lamps.” The demonstration was native and spontaneous. “Well, we have read of revolutions, and empires,” said an old Peshawari, noted for his bitterness against the English, “but we admit that never yet was such a spectacle seen, as so small

¹ In June, Taylor was still at work on the Grand Trunk Road, not far from Rawul Pindi, until one day Mr. Thornton, the Commissioner, chanced to say, “Why, Taylor, you ought to be at Delhi, working in the trenches instead of on this road!” “I would give my eyes to be there,” Taylor answered. “But my work is here, and I do not think it right to volunteer.” Struck by the reply Thornton rode off to report it to his chief. “Send him,” said Sir John, and Thornton rode back to inform Taylor that John Lawrence had ordered him to Delhi. “Looking round to some one who was near, Taylor said, quite simply, ‘Have you got a sword?’” and set off on his 700-mile ride.—Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 10.

a handful of foreigners maintaining such an empire against its own army and not yielding a foot of territory to anyone.”¹

Peshawar and the Derajat had already proved an excellent recruiting field, and the news supplied a stimulus to enlistment. Edwardes confessed, at the risk of damaging the character of his district, that “crime was never so rare in the Valley as during this crisis,” for all the outlaws had gone down to fight the “black men.” One troop alone contained sixty of these brigands, and the chieftain that raised it expressed the general opinion that, “Whether they kill the poorbeahs or the poorbeahs kill them, it will be an equal service to the State.” And now the Sikhs of the Manjha hesitated no longer. They had played a waiting game, cherishing the hope that when the English should be exterminated by “John Pandey,” who, greatly weakened in the process, would fall an easy victim to “John Singh,” the re-animated Khalsa would be the dominating power in Hindustan. Though they did not at once abandon hope, they changed their plans. They were now willing to receive English arms, equipment, and training, and to march against the poorbeah, confident that, when Englishman and Hindustani, worn out by the long death-struggle, should have exhausted all their resources, they alone in India would be left strong and ambitious. But one factor had been overlooked. “An army from England never entered our calculations.”²

For eight years the Khalsa had been languishing; the Sikh women had tired of the sterner religion and were fast reverting to the more attractive rites of Hinduism, dragging the men after them. The eight years of peace in the Punjab had devastated the ranks of the “Disciples” in a far more thorough manner than had the bloody wars of 1846

¹ *Memorials of Sir H. B. Edwardes.*

² *Meditations of a Sikh Soldier*, written to the *Friend of India*, “in remembrance of the English boy who saved my life at fatal Gujerat.”

and 1849, for Sikhism is essentially a militant religion. But now "with one word Sir John Lawrence recalled the Khalsa to life. The machinery by which Ranjit Singh had created armies was set in motion by British hands and thousands of Jats and stalwart men flocked to the scene. More rapidly than the sacred *pahul* [the Sikh initiation ceremony] could be administered, came these new converts, thirsting for the spoil of Delhi and Hindustan. Priests grew fat, and the tramp of armed men resounded through the land, recalling to mind the good old times. Sikhs were manufactured just because Sikhs were in demand, and during three years there seemed no limit save our will to the supply."¹ Under British officers they poured down the Grand Trunk Road towards Agra, Cawnpore, and Lucknow, and at Fatehghar they found the English army from over the seas, and the vision of a more powerful Khalsa faded away.

The part played by the Sikhs during the Mutiny crisis has been largely misunderstood, and far too much credit has been given to them for an enthusiastic loyalty that was never theirs, owing to the practice of classing all Punjabis indiscriminately as Sikhs—a short and easy but misleading term. The protected Sikh princes were gloriously loyal throughout, but, when the British were weakest, the men that responded to the call of John Lawrence and his lieutenants were mostly Punjabi Mussulmans—men of Hindu descent, whose forefathers had been forcibly converted—Pathan and Baluchi tribesmen from the Multan district and from the Afghan border, and Hindu Jats, who chose to call themselves Sikhs in time of war. The Sikhs

¹ *Elasticity of the Sikh People*, by the old Sikh quoted above. He was mistaken, however, in supposing that there was no check on the enlistment of Sikhs, for Sir John Lawrence was armed against the peril. "It strikes me," he wrote to Sir Colin Campbell, "that there is some danger that our officers, in their horror of John Pandy, may go into the other extreme and make too much of John Singh."



A SIKH OF THE MANJHA.
RISALDAR GURMUKH SINGH, 3RD PUNJAB CAVALRY.

in the Punjab regiments remained loyal and fought sturdily on the English side, but their loyalty was local and did not extend beyond their own officers, and not more than a few hundred strict *Singhs* enlisted until the English star was in the ascendant.

It cannot therefore be said that the Sikhs were loyal through love of the Lawrences. A number of their chief men, no doubt, were actuated by affection and gratitude, and loyalty is contagious; but the Sikh is a calculating man, and before committing himself to either side he wished to make sure which would pay best. But it was certainly due to the Lawrence influence and prestige that the Khalsa did not rise against the alien rulers, that, though the Sikhs were not reconciled to their fallen state, there was no active discontent of which the intriguer could take advantage to excite the passions and appeal to the prejudices of the peasantry.

It was, however, well that the capture of Delhi was not delayed, even for a few days, for the Punjab was barely able to endure the strain. In the Murree hills the tension snapped even while the guns were battering down the Delhi ramparts, and a more formidable insurrection broke out in the province of Multan on the day that the rebel stronghold was stormed. The Murree rising was easily suppressed, thanks to the early information obtained by Lady Lawrence who was there with her children; but the revolt at Gugara, midway between Lahore and Multan, spread rapidly, and the flame was fanned by the powerful Nawab of Bahawalpur, a large state to the south-east of the Multan province. Hitherto loyal in protestations, he now decided that the time had come to unmask, and he was already intriguing with the chiefs of the rebellious tribes when the news arrived that Delhi had fallen. With a promptitude equalling that displayed by the immortal Mr. Collins in acting upon Mr. Bennet's advice to stand

by him who had most to give, the nawab again turned his coat and arrested the ringleaders. Though saved from ruin by his second act of treachery, his subsequent attempts to conciliate John Lawrence were in vain.

The rebels still overran Oudh and the North-West Provinces, but that Union Jack, floating over the Imperial Palace, set the minds of loyal men at rest. The fighting might be prolonged indefinitely, but final victory was now assured to the British arms. On all sides John Lawrence was acclaimed "The Saviour of India," and the recognition of his services was instant and universal and unanimous.

"It is not our system, it is our men," said he, and, without doubt, he owed the completeness of his success to the officials whom he and his brother had trained. But of all the tributes paid to him as the foremost figure of the Mutiny year none was more hearty, none rang more true, than those of his subordinates, who—had it been possible to their nature—might with some justice have asked what John Lawrence could have done without their aid. But loyalty was in the air of the Punjab, and they were proud to shine with the reflection of their chief's glory.

Some of them had never become quite reconciled to the change of masters; they had looked upon John as the usurper of his brother's throne, and had—in the words of Edwardes—"looked for the day when the king shall enjoy his own again." They respected and admired the strong, silent, just man who was now their leader, but the fascination of the elder brother had brought out other sentiments than those of respect and admiration. A glance from *him*, a word of praise—even of rebuke—and he had gained another worshipper, whereas intimacy was needed to change into affection the respect that all men felt for John. But when the need arose he proved that he could lead as well as drive, could be tactful and patient as well as firm and stern, could stimulate and inspire as well as impel, and in

the year 1857 he won the affection of the most loyal of his brother's champions, so that none grudged him his meed of praise. On the day that the news arrived in Peshawar Edwardes wrote to him: "Sincerely do I congratulate you on this great success which has crowned your efforts for the last four months. Not a bayonet or a rupee has reached Delhi from Calcutta or England. It was been recovered by you and your resources with God's blessing."

To this Lawrence replied: "Few men, in a similar position, have had so many true and good supporters around him. But for them what could I have done?"

Other prominent soldiers and civilians wrote to him to the same effect—that he was the man that had handled the ship through the storm, steered it through the shoals, and brought it into port, and the Governor-General's official report records that, "Through him Delhi fell, and the Punjab, no longer a weakness, became a source of strength."

In a letter of warm congratulation Lord Dalhousie wrote from Malta: ". . . I would to God that your brother Henry had lived to enjoy the honours which would, undoubtedly, have been accorded to him, and to share with your friends the pleasure which his warm and generous heart would have especially felt in witnessing the distinction you were earning for yourself, side by side with him. But he rests in the death he would himself have wished to die, and his name will long live after him."¹

Sir John replied: ". . . My poor brother Henry died nobly at his post. To his intelligence and foresight the whole of the Lucknow garrison owe their lives. Nothing but these precautions could have enabled our people to make the stand they have done. . . ."

But when congratulations were being showered upon him, when his praises were being chanted through the length and breadth of the land, Sir John Lawrence was

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. pp. 183-185.

content to have tried to do his duty, and he gave God the praise that his work had not been in vain. The Lawrences and their Punjabis “present the one conspicuous instance in Indian history of a body of British rulers and officers going to work definitely as Christian men . . . confessing Christ before the world,”¹ and now, in Sir John’s official report, occur these words: “To Him alone, therefore, be all the praise.” It was not policy that saved India, said Montgomery—also in an official document—“The Lord our God, He it was.”

After the capture of Delhi, the city and district were transferred from the North-West Provinces and placed under the Punjab Administration, and another burden was added to the load already borne by the strong and willing horse. For four months he had spared no effort, left nothing undone, to compass the destruction of the rebels in Delhi. Now he came forward as the pacificator. Deeply religious—though reserved and heroically simple in expression—he aimed at establishing the policy of the conquerors upon Christian principles, that European and Asiatic might learn to forgive, that both should in time come to regard the horrors of the past as acts of frenzy rather than of deliberate cruelty. The ability to see the other side, to preserve a juster balance, generally goes with a strong sense of humour, and Sir John had at least as much sympathy with, and pity for, the sheep-like majority of the mutineers as anger against them; and though he would not spare the ringleaders, he stood up and spoke out for mercy, not vengeance; he preferred to set, rather than set forth, an example.

“There is a Judge over both them and us,” he wrote to the Government. “Inasmuch as we have been preserved from impending destruction by His mercy alone, we should be merciful to others.”

¹ *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. ii. p. 201.

The sepoy and budmashes of Delhi had fled from the city, and the few men that remained had probably not been actively hostile. But they were brown men, "niggers," whose skins bore witness against them: the victors had visited the scene of the massacre of the English women and children, and, during that delirium of retaliation, all that were not actually fighting on the English side were held to be against them, passive acquiescence in the restoration of the Mogul being construed as active hostility to the Government. The powers of life and death, granted to many subordinate officials, had been abused; every "nigger" was either a participator in the murders or an accomplice after the act, unless he could demonstrate his innocence. The onus of proof was upon him, not upon the prosecution.

Sir John's powers in Delhi were limited, and he could not curtail the authority granted by Government. However, he did much to bring about a better state of things; he prevailed upon Lord Canning to withdraw this power from men acting alone, and insisted that the evidence in every case should be recorded, and that weekly returns should be submitted to him. A wild cry arose, demanding that Delhi should be razed to the ground, that its site should be ploughed up and sown with salt, that at least the Jumma Musjid—the noblest Mussulman temple in the world—should be cast down. The Chief Commissioner refused to give way, would not be turned from his purpose by clamour, and gave command that the holy places should be spared. He interceded for the inhabitants who had fled from Delhi, and advised that they should be allowed to return, but in this matter the majority against him was too strong. The Hindus were given permission to return after a time, but the Mohammedans were excluded until the year 1859.

In this crusade against vengeance Lord Canning gave

him unflinching support. The popular voice in England as in India howled for punishment, for "examples"; distorted versions of the sufficiently horrible tragedies of Delhi and Cawnpore were granted ready credence, and the thoughtless and ill-balanced clamoured for a lesson that would strike awe into the breasts of the children's children. Those who had done least to uphold their country's honour in the face of danger, and those who had scouted the warnings and scoffed at the idea of any attempt by the sepoys to overthrow the English Raj, were, of course, the loudest. "Clemency" Canning they nick-named the Governor-General, because he declined to lose his head in emulation of their own condition.

Sir John also urged the Governor-General to permit those disarmed sepoys, who had taken no part in the fighting, to return to their homes, and in time he was allowed to use his own discretion. He sent them off from the various cantonments in batches of sixty at once, and so, in the Punjab alone, he disposed of 15,000 men who, dangerous combined, were harmless in their own villages. He advised Lord Canning to grant "an amnesty in favour of the least guilty of the mutineers. . . . It is much easier for people to advocate the destruction of all offenders than to show how this can be effected. Now that we have taken Delhi, beaten every large body of mutineers in the field, and are prepared to enter Oude again in force, we should simplify matters much if we issued a proclamation declaring that those mutineers who have not murdered their officers, or women or children, and who gave up their arms shall be allowed to go to their homes and live unmolested. . . . We could then deal more easily with the desperate characters. At present, all are held together from the very desperation of their condition. . . . Still we should not altogether forget that, as a ruling power, we have also our shortcomings and want of foresight to answer for, We placed

temptation and opportunity before the mutineers, which it was difficult to resist. . . ."¹

Unhappily the suggestion was not taken advantage of until much harm had been done.

On his advice the princes of Patiala, Jhind, Nabha, and Kapurthala were rewarded with grants of land and honours, and those sepoys who had been staunch were all remembered by him.² Even those who had been disarmed, and had remained passively loyal in spite of the temptation to show resentment, were not forgotten. To ensure the comfort of all who had fought and suffered for the English cause he spared no pains, and he gave sympathy and help to the widows and orphans of the fallen, native as well as European.

In spite of the abnormal demands made upon his reserve of strength during the four months of the siege his civil duties were never left to take care of themselves. He had carried on the administration of the province with almost as great efficiency as before the outbreak. During this period he had seen his wife once—a stolen visit³—and now that the hot season and the danger from the sepoys had

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 176.

² "Lambadar Roostum Khan and his brother Ali Mardan Khan furnished a number of Sowars mounted at their own expense, also a number of footmen during the crisis of 1857. These two men are deserving of the kind consideration of all British officers, and I hope they may always receive it. Ali Mardan Khan has taken service as a Duffadar in the 16th Bengal Cavalry."—Copy of certificate signed by Major Rd. Lawrence, Officiating Military Secretary to the Punjab Government, and dated Lahore, February 7, 1859, and now in the possession of Dafadar Dost Muhammad, 3rd Punjab Cavalry. These acknowledgments of the Government's gratitude are still cherished as valuable heirlooms by the sons and grandsons of the men who gained them.

³ "I saw him during the first two months of the Mutiny on every day but one," said Mr. Thornton, the Commissioner of Rawul Pindi. "On that day I went as usual to his house and found him gone. He had actually slipped off to see his wife at Murri! It was a flagrant escapade. He had no excuse. But he couldn't help it,"—Bosworth Smith, vol. i. p. 512.

passed, her health gave way, and they met only to part again. Lady Lawrence wished to take the risk, knowing how useful her help and companionship would be, but Sir John would not hear of it; she must rejoin the children in England.

"My husband," said Lady Lawrence,¹ "looked very ill and worn after the long strain of anxiety. But his work never relaxed, nor did he give himself any rest." Though he longed to be in England he refused to quit his post until the country had settled down and its tangled affairs had been unravelled and the unavoidable arrears wiped off.

On December 15, 1857, he assured Bartle Frere that, "I am ready to do anything I can for the public service, and, so long as I hold the helm here, will keep matters straight, under God's help. But I am growing old and weary, and often think that the time is approaching when I ought to make my bow and be off. Do what one can, little real progress is effected."² And to Currie eight months later: "With the exception of the month when I went to Calcutta, early in 1856, to bid Lord Dalhousie good-bye, I have not had a day's rest for nearly sixteen years. No human being, for a continuance, can bear the wear and tear of my post, doing the duty as it should be done with no greater aid than I receive, and not break down. Year by year, the work, instead of becoming less, has increased . . . more than half the new Bengal army has been raised, organised and equipped by me. Then, the Delhi territory has been placed under me. All this is very honourable, and I am far from shrinking from the load it entails; and had I been made Lieutenant-Governor of the country with an adequate staff at my command, I should not have minded. . . .

"I am glad to see by the last *Overland Mail* news that

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 165,

² *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 217.

Henry's son has at last received the honours due to his father's great merits. Henry's death was an even greater calamity to his country than to his family. What would not be the value of his services at the present crisis? We sorely want such men. We have not yet conquered India. And, even when this has been accomplished, a still harder task—that of pacifying the people and healing old wounds—is before us. It is a task which the bravest and best may shrink from. It is one in which a great man may break his heart and lose his life, and which, even should he by God's help accomplish it, will never be appreciated.”¹

In the autumn of 1858 one of his wishes was realised, for the Punjab was made a Lieutenant-Governorship—a change that brought with it, in addition to the improved status, an increased staff and various other advantages.

The losses of the war had brought about great changes of personnel in the Punjab, and the year 1858 witnessed a gradual redistribution of officers. Among others Sir John had to part with Montgomery who succeeded Sir Henry as Chief Commissioner of Oudh; and Richard Lawrence, having taken leave of his “Rosebuds,” became Military Secretary to his brother. The important appointments conferred upon men trained in the Punjab school led to protests from the older provinces, and Lord Canning's reply announcing his intention of promoting more Punjabis was more complimentary to the Lawrence influence than satisfactory to the rejected.

In the year 1858 the Government of India passed from the East India Company to the Crown, and, in view of the coming re-organisation of the services, Herbert Edwardes published his famous *Memorandum on the Elimination of all Unchristian Principles from the Government of British India*. He was firmly convinced that the Company, in its zeal for religious neutrality, had been less

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. pp. 223-225.

than fair to Christianity, and he argued that the ready credence given to stories so absurd as the conversion to Christianity by means of bullock-bone flour and greased cartridges was largely due to native ignorance of Christian doctrine. He believed that, had the Bible been given the same status as the Koran and the books of the Brahmans in the Government schools, there might have been a leaven of knowledge sufficient to have prevented the panic of the ignorant. The Bible, he maintained, had been condemned in the schools through fear lest its teaching should offend the religious prejudices of the people; and the Mutiny had demonstrated that, because the natives had been discouraged from becoming more intimate with Christian principles, a woefully false impression had prevailed. Among other arguments he pointed out that mission schools, in which the Bible was taught, were more popular than Government schools even in the strongholds of bigotry.

This "exclusion of the Bible as a class-book . . . is, perhaps, our capital offence, because it is one of deliberate commission." Nine other "unchristian elements" were enumerated. Before sending the memorandum to Lord Shaftesbury for publication in England, he submitted copies to some of his colleagues in the Punjab, with the object of forcing their hands and eliciting their views for the benefit of the English nation.

Donald Macleod was one of the first to express any opinion. Edwardes considered his letter to be "well weighed, and just, and mild, and lowly; and outspoken in a gentle voice. It is a perfect picture of himself, and I rejoice to have fulfilled the office of a pump, and drawn so much sweet water to the surface. It does not go quite so far as mine in some respects, but goes a great way, and has some valuable new propositions, and is altogether a beautiful expression of Christian sentiment. The angelic

tone of it contrasts very favourably with the vehement and often ironic tone of mine."

"What a splendid article Edwardes has written on Christian Government!" said Montgomery. "What a sensation it will create at home!"

The head of the Punjab Education Department was Mr. William Arnold, son of Arnold of Rugby. He protested against the introduction of the Bible as a class-book on the ground that the English were merely the trustees of the Hindus, a proposition which Sir John Lawrence promptly controverted. "Mr. Macleod has most justly observed," he wrote, "that many of Mr. Arnold's arguments are based on the assumption that the British Government stands in the same relation towards the people of India as a representative Government stands towards its people. . . . If, by being trustees for the people, we are supposed to be bound invariably by the will of the people, then we are not, the Chief Commissioner thinks, trustees in that sense. We have not been elected or placed in power by the people, but we are here through our moral superiority, by the force of circumstances, by the will of Providence. This alone constitutes our charter to govern India.

"In doing the best we can for the people, we are bound by our conscience, and not by theirs. Believing that the study of the Bible is fraught with the highest blessings, we, of course, do desire to communicate those blessings to them if we can."

To Arnold he wrote: "I believe that, provided neither force nor fraud were used, Christ would assuredly approve of the introduction of the Bible. We believe that the Bible is true, that it is the only means of salvation. Surely we should lend our influence in making it known to our subjects. . . . I believe that, provided we do it wisely and judiciously, the people will gradually read that book. I

have reason to suppose this because the missionaries are successful. . . .”

In the official reply to Edwardes he stated that, “. . . In respect to the teaching of the Bible in Government Schools and Colleges, I am to state that, in the Chief-Commissioner’s judgment, such teaching ought to be offered to all those who may be willing to receive it . . . that it should be taught in class wherever we have teachers fit to teach it and pupils willing to hear it. . . . So long as the attendance is voluntary there will be boys to attend; but, if it be obligatory, then suspicion is aroused, and there is some chance of empty benches. Moreover, as a matter of principle, the Chief-Commissioner believes that, if anything like compulsion enters into our system of diffusing Christianity, the rules of that religion itself are disobeyed and that we shall never be permitted to profit by our disobedience. . . .”

On some of the other points raised Sir John could not agree with Colonel Edwardes—the proposed resumption of ancient “grants on alienations from the public revenue for native religions,” continued by the Company after the absorption of states; the discontinuance of the present recognition of the native holy-days in the public offices; and the argument that “in our criminal and civil administration we still adhere too strictly to the Hindu and Mohammedan laws.” He contended that in these and similar matters Edwardes was not sufficiently tolerant of native prejudices.

Well pleased, however, that he had such strong support for his main proposition, Edwardes said: “It is a noble expression of the duty of the Indian Government to do whatever Christianity requires, at whatever cost; and it only differs from mine as to what Christianity *does* demand of us, and what it does *not*. It stops a long way short of

my proposals. Still, on the whole, it is a fine manifesto, and I rejoice to have elicited it."

Though Delhi had fallen on September 20, 1857, the Mutiny was not finally stamped out before the spring of the year 1859, when the Nana Sahib and his wretched followers were swept into, and finally lost in, the jungles of the Nepal Terai.

CHAPTER XXV

(1859-1869)

VICEROY OF INDIA

Honours—Reception in England—Appointed Viceroy—The Orissa Famine—Crisis in Bombay—Public Works—Tenancy Acts—Relations with Secretaries of State—His Simplicity—Calumnies—His Durbars—Raised to the Peerage.

SIR JOHN LAWRENCE had felt that while Mutiny still dared to raise its head he could not be spared from the Punjab, however great the longing to go home and the need for rest, and having obtained Montgomery's appointment as his successor, on February 26, 1859, he left Lahore for England. In recognition of his Mutiny services he had been made a G.C.B., a baronet, and a Privy Councillor; the Freedom of the City of London had been conferred upon him, and the East India Company had granted him a pension of £2000 a year, but the people of England felt that these honours and rewards were insufficient. "Your name and services are in every one's mouth," Lord Stanley wrote. "Be prepared for such a reception in England as no one has had for twenty years."¹

The great Punjabi was welcomed by the English nation with a tribute of admiration the more worthy of acceptance that, as nearly two years had passed since the date of his triumph, the acclamations could not be mistaken for the clamour of an indiscriminating and sensation-loving mob. In addition to the ceremony at the Guildhall, the Honorary Degrees of the chief universities were conferred upon him;

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 244.



Lord Lawrence.

he was welcomed to Windsor where the Queen and the Prince Consort delighted to honour him; and he received an address signed by some eight thousand of the most influential persons in the land. A deep impression had been made upon the public mind by his outspoken expression of opinion on the duty of Christians in India, and, in presenting the address, Dr. Tait (then Bishop of London) referred to and quoted from this declaration. "You laid down the principle," said he, "that 'having endeavoured solely to ascertain what is our Christian duty, we should follow it out to the uttermost undeterred by any consideration.' . . . You have recorded your conviction that Christian things done in a Christian way will never alienate the heathen. . . . These words are memorable. Their effect will be happy not only on your age but on ages to come."

"All we did was no more than our duty and even our immediate interest," said Lawrence in acknowledging the tribute to his services. "It was no more than the necessities of our position impelled us to attempt. Our sole chance of escape was to resist to the last. The path of duty, of honour, and of safety was clearly marked out for us. . . . To use the words of my heroic brother at Lucknow, it was incumbent on us never to give in. We had no retreat, no scope for compromise. That we were eventually successful against the fearful odds which beset us, was alone the work of the great God who so mercifully vouchsafed His protection."

But, though not immune from the "last infirmity of noble minds," the glare of publicity repelled rather than attracted him, and his secretary, Mr. Brandreth, has told of his master's alarm and indignation when he threatened, in jest, to inform the Mayor of Dover of the hour of the hero's departure from Calais. The rôle of social lion was distasteful to him, and he held most dear the hours devoted to his wife and children.

These four years in England were among the happiest of his life. Before leaving India he had been appointed a member of the newly-formed Council of India, and though a sense of duty led him to accept, he grudged the time spent at the India Office. While Chief Commissioner of the Punjab he had expressed a wish to retire from public life and turn "farmer or grazier," and now he seemed near to the realisation of his ambition. But it was not to be. Canning's successor, Lord Elgin, died suddenly, and on November 30, 1863, Sir Charles Wood, who had succeeded Lawrence's friend Lord Stanley as Secretary of State for India, called to ask his acceptance of the Viceroyalty.

Forty-seven years before, Lord Palmerston, then a secretary at the War Office, had signed the letter that refused Colonel Alexander Lawrence's petition for the full pension to which he was entitled. In 1857 the same statesman had nominated one son, Henry, as Provisional Governor-General of India, and now the highest office under the Crown was offered by him to a younger son, an offer acclaimed by the voice of the people, who, accepting him as "a great statesman, an unrivalled administrator, a colossal workman, a genuine Englishman, a brave Christian, a grand pillar of our country, and a glory to its public life,"¹ had, indeed, resented what they rightly deemed the inadequate official recognition of his services.

He did not wish to go. "The Governor-Generalship is too good a post for a fellow like me," he had said to Sir Colin Campbell, who had once expressed the hope that he would eventually attain the position. But a check to the British arms on the frontier—the Umbeyla Campaign—seemed likely to kindle a serious tribal war, and his knowledge of, and prestige on, the border were urged as reasons for compliance. He hearkened to the stern voice of Duty

¹ Sir Herbert Edwardes in *The Leisure Hour*, January 5, 1860.

and accepted the offer before consulting his wife, lest her grief should weaken his resolution.

"It has been happily determined," said *The Times*, "to break through the charmed circle which has so long restricted the office of Governor-General to the Peerage, and to send out to the Empire which was formed by the exertions of Robert Clive and Warren Hastings, not only a commoner but a commoner wholly unconnected with any family of the English aristocracy. The person, however, on whom the choice of the Government has rested is a man stamped by the hand of Nature with the truest impress of nobility, and though not born to inherit aristocratic titles, is peculiarly calculated to create them. Every one will recognise from this description that the new Governor-General of India is Sir John Lawrence."

He returned to India in better health than he had enjoyed for many years, sanguine but under no illusion. As a young man in a subaltern position—in charge of the Jalandar Doab—he had determined to "put his stamp" on the country, and now, called to the chief command, cheered by his reception at Calcutta, assured of the glad support of his old Punjabis, he would, please God, so order affairs "that in after times people may look back and recall my Raj with satisfaction." Disappointment was, however, to be his portion. Not the bitter mortification of utter failure, nor the shattering of his reputation, but the distressing reflection that much more might have been accomplished had his hands been more free, had circumstances been less antagonistic. Dalhousie and the other Governors-General under whom he had served had not been tied to the end of a cable; he himself had made his name ring through the world when cut off from higher authority and compelled to play "off his own bat," to quote one of his pet phrases. Yet though his Viceroyalty was not marked by any event of striking political import-

ance, he did much for India's welfare, and his influence upon Anglo-Indian "tone" was felt long after his departure. His reforms bore fruit; the march of progress was accelerated; the lot of the *ryot* was improved, but there were no fireworks and limelight to dazzle the eyes and call forth the plaudits of the mob. The two wars of his reign—the Bhotan War and the Black Mountain Expedition—were brought to a conclusion without the accompaniment of any brilliant victory or triumph to appeal to the popular imagination, and he had to meet adverse conditions against which he was sometimes powerless.

The awful suffering and loss of life caused by famine and flood in Orissa could not be—and were not—charged to his account. The executive authority rested with the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, whom Sir John Lawrence sent down to Orissa to examine and report, and the Viceroy was bound to accept his official assurance that there was no contingency for which the local Government was not prepared, no difficulty with which they would be unable to cope. When he became convinced that the replies to his inquiries and the response to his exhortations were unsatisfactory, and when his confidence in the ability of the local authorities to appreciate the gravity of the crisis had been shaken, his promptness, energy, and resolution once more demonstrated that he was the same John Lawrence who had ruled the Punjab and stemmed the flood of mutiny. But the evil was done; the monsoon prevented the landing of relief-ships; the floods that succeeded the drought cut off communications by land, and one million people perished.

In the House of Commons the action of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was strongly condemned, but the Viceroy was exonerated from blame. Sir Stafford Northcote, the Secretary of State for India, wrote: ¹ "There was

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 363.

a very general feeling of sympathy with yourself personally ; and I hope you will allow me to say that, after carefully reading all that has come before me, I receive the impression that there is no one in England or in India who more entirely deserves our sympathy under this sad calamity than your Excellency. It is cruel indeed that such a visitation should have come upon the land when it was under the charge of one so peculiarly distinguished for his affection for the people. At the same time, I cannot help feeling some consolation in the thought that we shall have the advantage of your counsel and assistance in the endeavours which must now be made to turn the lesson to profit."

The second blow to the Lawrence administration came from the Bombay side, and in this case also circumstances were too strong for the Viceroy. The American War, by closing the main source of the cotton supply, created a demand for the Indian article, and a period of unheard-of prosperity led to reckless speculation of which the company promoter took advantage. The example set by Bombay was followed—with less *abandon*—in other towns. Then cotton, which had gone up from £44 a ton to £189, rapidly fell almost to normal, and one bank after another came down with a crash, the shock being felt throughout Hindustan.

These catastrophes crippled the Governor-General's resources, impoverished his treasury, caused delay in the construction of public works, and must have weighed very heavily upon one so strenuously devoted to the welfare of his people. As yet, however, no blame was imputed to him, no attempt made to depreciate the value of his services to India. That came later.

Four of his five budgets showed deficits, and as he had always held as an article of faith—almost equal in importance to that which forbade arrears of work—that expendi-

ture should not exceed income, his disappointment at the apparent failure to practise as he had preached will be understood. Yet few were found to blame him when, for a time, he allowed a favourite maxim to go by the board. From the financial standpoint alone, to spend freely on irrigation—and get the money's worth—would prove less expensive than another Orissa famine; to increase the efficiency of the European army in India than another Mutiny; to build barracks in accordance with the plans of experts in sanitation—"palaces" the scoffers termed them—than to invite an epidemic to kill off the costly British soldier. Railways, canals, telegraphs, roads, schools, hospitals, and gaols, costly sanitary reforms in Calcutta and other towns, the re-organisation of the native police and magistracy, all would pay for themselves in time, and though his work might fail to dazzle the popular mind, which demands the outward and visible signs of success for to-day and would let the morrow take care of itself, the benefit would sooner or later be felt, and he would have done his duty. He spent £5,000,000 upon barracks and £26,000,000 upon railways.¹

Though the expenditure increased from forty-six millions sterling to more than fifty-four millions, the fact did not shake his popularity: his proposals for raising the money did. He wished to renew the income-tax which would leave the hand-to-mouth-existing *ryot* untouched, and would fall upon the planters and traders, European, Hindu, and Parsee, and the wealthy classes of every nationality. Thereupon rose a shrill scream of protestation, and, to judge from the tone of the Anglo-Indian press, John

¹ The report for the Home Government on the subject of railways was drawn up by Colonel Strachey of the Public Works Department, one of Lawrence's best subordinates. The Viceroy read through the document, admired its technicalities, and observed to its author as he signed it: "What a clever chap they will think me at home!"—Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 349.

Lawrence's unequalled services were forgotten. He smarted under the abuse, but was not turned from his purpose. In Council, however, he was defeated, and had to be content with a compromise, a "licence-tax," less thorough and less fair in its incidence.

He brought forward and carried important measures which defined the relations between landowners and tenants and safeguarded the rights of the cultivators. The first of these, the Punjab Tenancy Act, placed the chaotic question of land tenure in the Punjab upon a more satisfactory basis. A Bill dealing with tenant right in Oudh, where the conditions were dissimilar, raised another storm of opposition from the talukdars and from European landowners in Bengal. He appealed to the Home Government, obtained its support, and, though forced to compromise in order to conciliate the objectors, he was able to pass an Act that has since worked smoothly.

Sir John's relations with the successive Secretaries of State for India—Sir Charles Wood, Lord de Grey (now Marquis of Ripon), Lord Cranborne (the late Marquis of Salisbury), and Sir Stafford Northcote—were cordial and sympathetic; and he was ever treated by them with the deference due to a hero. Lord Cranborne's racy letters he compared to a stirrup-cup, so stimulating was their effect upon him when jaded and depressed. Unfortunately, however, his unpopularity among certain classes was undoubted, but though his calumniators had the power of making their opposition both heard and felt, the agitation was on the surface, more loud than deep, and was mainly confined to Calcutta and the Gangetic Provinces. He remained the hero of the Punjab. He attempted, indeed, to model the whole country upon the administration of that province, and was abused because of his preference for Punjabis in all departments of both services.

In a letter to the Secretary of State he alludes to such

remonstrances and points out that, as the Punjab has for many years been a training-ground for the best type of officer, the work-loving, energetic man, desirous of, and fitted to bear, the burden of responsibility, "it is not easy to select men of mark, who are not, in some degree, open to this reproach. But, if I know myself at all, I believe that the sole motive I have had in view is the public service, and that, for all appointments of any real importance, I have selected officers only for their approved merits. I know not a single instance in which any of these men have failed to do justice to my selection. I claim no merit in this way; for any other conduct, in my difficult position, would be simply suicidal. But, at any rate, I do not deserve the obloquy which has been cast upon me. No man, however, in high position, who does not help those who have done him service by doing well that of the State, is fitted for command."¹

He never, however, allowed motives of friendship to influence an appointment, for jobbery was especially abhorrent to his nature. "'Why don't you give me the post?'" said a very near relative to him once; "I am as fit for it as anybody else." "That's just it," replied the Governor-General; "you are *as* fit as anybody else, but as you are a near relative, you ought to be better fitted for it than any one else, to justify me in giving it to you.'"

His opponents were not scrupulous in method or in language, and they tried to hurt. His disregard of vice-regal precedent they held up to ridicule, and sneered at what they chose to consider his affectation of simplicity, pretending to regret that he should so degrade the dignity of his high office. One of his crimes was a preference for walking about unattended, all well-regulated Governors-General having been in the habit of driving or riding under

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 342.

escort. In the early days of his Viceroyalty a sentry kept him at bayonet's point from entering his own palace. The sepoy had too high an opinion of what was due from a Governor-General to give heed to the absurd story that the simply-dressed man on foot could be the great *Jan Larens*.¹ One exceptionally hot Sunday he considerably dismissed six of the eight troopers of his escort, and in reply to the staff-officer's protest on the score of official dignity, he declared that, "If I can't go to church with *two* troopers as my escort, I am not fit to be Governor-General of India."

The old Punjab habit of working unencumbered by coat, waistcoat, or collar, and with shirt-sleeves turned up, clung to him still, and proved another ground of offence. Great scandal was caused by his reception *in slippers* of a "deputation of Calcutta dignitaries." On learning from his secretary that some of the magnates had regarded the oversight as an affront, he exclaimed, "Why, Hathaway, they were quite new and good slippers!"²

The more unscrupulous of his opponents seized upon these stories, and—having added a smack of the grotesque—sent them forth again to persuade the world that Sir John Lawrence was a boor. Imagine Dalhousie receiving an influential deputation in his slippers! refused admittance by his sentry! They failed in their object. The Viceroy's "heroic simplicity" was known from Peshawar to Calcutta, and as the clown depicted by the hostile press bore no resemblance to the real John Lawrence, little harm was done.

Then his depreciators grew less particular about the foundation of fact. In spite of his well-known generosity they dared to accuse him of meanness—practically of an attempt to make a profit out of the viceregal allowance, because he had had the courage to abolish certain offices

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. pp. 282-283.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 290.

in the palace that were neither useful nor ornamental—expenses continued because they had been begun. The viceregal dinners and entertainments were condemned as “cheap and nasty,” the wines said to be inferior to his predecessor’s, and—after his departure—not to be compared with those of his successor, the truth being that he had bought up Lord Elgin’s stock, and had sold his own surplus to Lord Mayo.¹

But, though pomp and ostentation were uncongenial to his nature, Sir John Lawrence was never indifferent to their value at the proper time and place. He knew to how great extent externals count in the Oriental mind, and was not prepared altogether to ignore the Hindu axiom that power and pageantry go hand in hand. His durbars at Lahore, Agra, and Lucknow were made to overshadow in splendour those of all previous Governors-General.

At Lahore he was surrounded by old friends and well-tried comrades; his schoolfellow Montgomery was Lieutenant-Governor; and there were the princes and chieftains of the Punjab and of the frontier states and tribes who had stood by him in the hour of trial.

In the course of his speech at Agra he reminded the assembled potentates that, “The art of governing wisely and well is a difficult one, which is only to be attained by much thought, and care, and labour. Few Kings and Chiefs in Hindustan have possessed the necessary qualifications because they have not taken the precaution in their youth to learn how to study and to act for themselves. Nor have they cared to have their sons, those who were to succeed them, well instructed and carefully trained. Hence it has so often happened, that, after a Chief has passed away, he has not been remembered as a good and wise ruler. Great men, when living, often receive praise from their friends and adherents for virtues which they do

¹ Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 286.

not possess, and it is only after this life is ended that the real truth is told. Of all fame that such men can acquire, that alone is worth having which is accorded to a just and beneficent ruler. The names of conquerors and heroes are forgotten. But those of virtuous and wise Chiefs live for ever." And he assured them that "the British Government will honour that chief most who excels in the good management of his people; who does most to put down crime, and improve the condition of his country."

When the Lucknow durbar was over, as

The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart,

John Lawrence visited the room in which his brother had been struck down, and stood for some time by the simple tomb in the Residency grounds, alone with his thoughts.

In the summer of 1867 he contemplated resigning, "having been suffering a good deal of late from my old complaint in my head. . . . I am not at all sure that I shall not break down." Moreover, Lady Lawrence "is in delicate health, and must go home." However, he decided to stay on, but by the time that his term had run its course his health had utterly broken down and he was glad to welcome Lord Mayo, his successor.

He landed in England in March 1869 a worn-out man, though but fifty-eight years old, and shortly after his arrival he was raised to the peerage with the title "Baron Lawrence of the Punjab and of Grately."¹

¹ Grately was the name of a small estate left to him on the death of his sister, Mrs. Hayes.

CHAPTER XXVI

(1869-1879)

THE LAST YEARS OF JOHN LAWRENCE

Home Life—The London School Board—Tributes to Missionary Work—Miss Gaster's Reminiscences—The Forward Policy—He condemns the Government's Afghan Policy—His Death.

LORD LAWRENCE'S official connection with India was over, and his ideal of domestic happiness at last seemed possible of attainment. And in a measure it was attained, though the realisation of the day-dreams of the stifling *kutcheri* was only partial, for the children whom he had loved to gather round him, in whose romps he had joined with a zest hardly less than their own, had grown up and were dispersed.¹

During the parents' last absence from England they had lived at Southgate with their aunt Letitia and their cousin Honoria, the daughter of Sir Henry Lawrence. On the death of Mrs. Hayes, Sir Herbert and Lady Edwardes had generously taken charge of the Southgate house so that Lady Lawrence might remain another year with her husband. The family now removed to Queen's Gate, Kensington, and in 1871 Brockett Hall, Hertfordshire, became their country home.

Though fairly regular in his attendance at the House of Lords, Lord Lawrence took little part in debate. He was

¹ Nine children were living at this date—four sons, John, Henry, Charles Napier, and Bertie, and five daughters, Kate, Emily, Alice Margaret, Mary, and Maude. A son and daughter had died in infancy. The eldest, Kate (married in 1868 to Colonel Randall), was born in 1843, the youngest, Maude, in 1864.

no orator, and, in common with most men of prompt and decisive action and of administrative ability, he distrusted overmuch fluency of language, though he listened with admiration, and some envy, to genuine eloquence. Mr. Gladstone, writing to express the pleasure that Lawrence's acceptance of a peerage had given him, had expressed the opinion that the House of Lords was to be congratulated; and that the peers themselves endorsed the Premier's tribute was made manifest by the cheers that rose from all parts of the House to greet his first speech.

In politics a moderate Liberal, he was never a strong party man. One of the first measures of importance upon which he was called to vote was the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, and, as an Irishman, says Sir Richard Temple, "he followed with keen but melancholy interest the important debates which ensued, without however taking any part in them. He voted for the second reading, in the belief that resistance to the main principle of the measure had become hopeless in the circumstances, and that it only remained for the friends of the Church in the House of Lords to try and make the terms of disestablishment more favourable to her."

In the year 1870 Mr. Forster's Education Act came into force, and Lord Lawrence allowed himself to be nominated as a candidate for the first London School Board; and, being elected by a large majority, he was appointed chairman of the board. As Head of the Punjab and as Viceroy of India he had done his utmost to encourage the spread of education, and in England he had given a hearty support to the schools at Grately and Southgate. His appreciation of the benefit that would be conferred upon the nation by Mr. Forster's Act impelled him to throw himself into the work of the board with so much zest as to give rise to uneasiness in the minds of friends, who feared the consequence of so severe a tax upon his strength.

He presided over the weekly meetings of the board with wisdom and tact, listening to much futile outpouring of words without giving a sign of the impatience he must have felt, always throwing the weight of his influence on the side of toleration and moderation, always seeking to combine what was best in the ideas and proposals of opposing members when these were not fundamentally antagonistic. His belief in the necessity for religious instruction as the basis of true education was decided and uncompromising, and he prevailed. Unfortunately the fears entertained by those who knew and loved him best were soon justified, and he was compelled, by lack of sleep, to give himself a holiday. After a three months' tour in France and Italy with his wife, he resumed his duties on the board until the end of its three years' term, when he reluctantly decided not to offer himself for re-election. He had been able to give an impetus to the Act's career of usefulness; he must leave the carrying-on of the work to others. The wisdom of the decision was, unhappily, only too evident, and the first chairman of the London School Board retired amid general regret, expressed ungrudgingly by both parties on the board.

Having accepted the office of vice-president of the Church Missionary Society he frequently attended its committee and public meetings, and his testimonies to the value of missionary effort in India did much to strengthen the faith of many earnest Christians who had become disheartened by the apparent lack of impression made upon India's myriads. His words are still quoted as the witness of one who had had unique opportunities of judging, whose insight and discrimination were enthusiastically acknowledged, who was known to weigh his words carefully, and who would never descend to convey a false impression for the sake of compliment. At a Wesleyan missionary meeting he said: "I believe that, notwith-

standing all that the people of England have done to benefit India (that is, by philanthropic effort), the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined. . . . But such has been the effect of their earnest zeal, untiring devotion, and of the excellent example which they have universally shown, that in spite of the great masses of the people being opposed to their doctrine, they are, as a body, popular in the country. I have a great reverence and regard for them, both personally and for the sake of the great cause in which they are engaged."

From early childhood his eyes had been a source of uneasiness; in his sixty-fifth year they were the cause of great anxiety and intense pain; he was no longer able to read, and the result of several consultations with specialists was discouraging. In July 1876 an unsuccessful operation was followed by "a long weary time of blindness and agony, borne with the most wonderful sweetness and patience."¹ A third operation, some months later, partially restored his sight, but he had lost the use of one eye for ever.

As he grew older the tender simplicity of his nature became more abundantly evident, though the apparent sternness was never wholly laid aside. Miss Gaster, his private secretary, tells² how, in his drives from Brockett Hall to the station, he would never pass a woman, whose age or burden seemed to make the walk a toil, without stopping the carriage and compelling her to enter, "however dirty or hot" she might be. One Sunday, after a strong wind had wrought havoc among his trees, he led out the active members of the household to gather the scattered branches, tie them in bundles, and drag them through the park to present to the old women who kept the lodge-gates. To illustrate his "rooted dislike to waste of any kind,"

¹ Lady Lawrence, Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. p. 466.

² Bosworth Smith, vol. ii. pp. 470-474.

Miss Gaster says that, "Very soon after I made his acquaintance he ascertained that I was not of a saving disposition. My spending days came to an abrupt conclusion. Part of my salary was kept back *nolens volens*, five per cent. allowed on it, and my finances put on a firm basis." While taking his daily walk with her shortly before his last illness, he had to confess that, "I feel so worn out, I can hardly stagger along." They were passing a fruit-shop and, "seeing how tired and thirsty he seemed," she proposed that they should buy a basket of the tempting strawberries there displayed. They went in and asked the price, and, hearing it, John Lawrence, who had "held the Gorgeous East in fee," at once came out again. "Spend ten shillings on myself for such a purpose! I never did such a thing in my life!"

Before the close of his strenuous life Lord Lawrence was deeply grieved to witness the overthrow of the frontier policy with which his name had become identified. Upon more than one occasion he had found his views upon Afghan affairs opposed to those of friends whose knowledge of the border tribes was equal to his own. He had had little hope that any satisfaction would be derived from the treaty with Dost Mohammed, and had smiled grimly at the enthusiasm of Herbert Edwardes; and when the Commissioner of Peshawar had been justified by the amir's friendly attitude throughout the crisis of 1857, many of Lawrence's admirers allowed themselves to doubt whether after all the invincible John Lawrence had not a vulnerable heel—whether, though ready to place absolute trust in his judgment upon all other matters, one reservation might not be made. Other Anglo-Indians of equal authority maintained that Dost Mohammed remained neutral, not on account of the treaty, but because of his conviction that the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab would prove himself equal to any emergency.

Dost Mohammed had died in the year 1863, just before Lawrence's return to India as Viceroy. For a time Afghanistan was convulsed by civil war, and as one claimant to the throne defeated a rival he would appeal to the Viceroy for recognition and assistance. Lawrence declined to interfere; the ruler whom the Afghans accepted would be recognised by England, but must expect no help. Finally Shere Ali, the third son and nominee of Dost Mohammed, got the better of his opponents and secured the throne, and he and the Viceroy came to an understanding. So long as he remained *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan the Indian Government would help him to keep his borders intact and his turbulent subjects in order by gifts of arms and money, but not a man would be sent across the frontier: without England's approval he was not to conclude treaties with foreign powers; and though England must refuse to enter into a defensive and offensive alliance, he, the amir, was to be "the friend of our friends and the enemy of our enemies": should Russia encroach, England would supply the Afghans with arms and money, and would deal with her elsewhere, but not in Afghanistan itself.

Shere Ali had raised the objection that this arrangement was one-sided, but he could get no better terms from Sir John Lawrence, whose knowledge of the suspicious, jealous nature of the Afghans convinced him that Englishmen that should enter Afghanistan, even as allies or military advisers, would be regarded as enemies, that the presence of a British force in Kabul, even at the request of the ruler and with the definite purpose of defending the country against Russian aggression, would merely serve to incite hatred of the English and force the Afghans to the Russian side. "Never talk of sending a Resident to Kabul," Dost Mohammed had once advised him, for even he, the strong man of Afghanistan, "could not ensure his safety," and the warning had been laid to heart. Law-

rence maintained that whenever Russia might make the attempt upon India, the Afghans would probably—influenced by no regard for England's interests—oppose the advance tooth and nail, and would so harass and delay and weaken an invading army that a strong British force would have little difficulty in disposing of whatever remnant might make its way through the passes, and that the subsequent retreat of the invaders would result in such utter destruction that the attempt would not be repeated. As Viceroy he had also urged upon the Home Government that Russia “might be given to understand in firm but courteous language, that it cannot be permitted to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan.”

But a new school of policy had been founded on the frontier and had grown powerful, for its *gurus* were men whose ability, experience, high character, and personal influence gave weight to their counsels. The “Forward Policy” had been tried with undoubted success by Sir Robert Sandeman and Sir Bartle Frere and their disciples along the upper Sind and Baluchistan frontiers. “With very little fighting,” said Lord Roberts in the House of Lords on March 7, 1898, “Baluchistan—an immense tract of mountain and desert country, and inhabited by clans as wild and restless as any on our frontier—was rescued by that practical border officer [Sandeman] from a condition of absolute chaos, and turned into what is now a peaceful and prosperous province, where our officers move about freely escorted by the tribesmen themselves, and are everywhere met by signs of confidence and respect. Sir Robert Sandeman used to describe his policy as one of peace and goodwill,’ and that it certainly was.”

Sandeman, Frere, and their followers had won the friendship of the wild Baluchi chiefs, for the forward policy, as initiated by them and as approved at present by Lord Roberts and other distinguished frontier officers, does not

necessarily imply conquest by arms, but rather an earnest endeavour to extend British influence with the approval and goodwill of the tribesmen themselves. The true Afghans—the Duranis—and all the Sunni tribes are undoubtedly bitter fanatics, prompt to raise the green standard of Islam and proclaim *jehad* at the bidding of the mullahs; but the Kazilbashes, the Hazaras (of Western Afghanistan), and a large proportion of the amir's subjects belong to the more tolerant and less inflammable Shiah sect, and these would welcome any change of policy calculated to protect trade and promote intercourse with the Punjab and Hindustan. The new school believed that though Afghan suspicion would be difficult to allay, a better understanding and more friendly relations with Afghanistan might be secured in time if the amir could be prevailed upon to consent to the presence of an English mission in his dominions, and if the right men could be sent, men with sympathy and tact and knowledge, whose motives were above suspicion. Their duty would be to demonstrate practically that, as their interests were bound together, England's aim was to strengthen and advance the prosperity of Afghanistan, and that such a consummation would be much more to her liking than the conquest of a barren country. Without any expectation of instantaneous success they ardently believed that in time the Afghan would regard the Englishman as a friend. They maintained that friendship and understanding were essential, and that so long as England held aloof and discouraged intercourse the Russian would be able to bid higher for Afghan support, and that the national greed, excited by the prospect of sacking the rich towns of India, would prove even stronger than the hatred of the *kafir*. Lawrence had, indeed, stated that, should the Russians be able to convince the Afghans of the assured success of a joint invasion, "I feel no shadow of a doubt that . . . the Afghans *en masse*,

from the Amir of the day to the domestic slave of the household, would readily join in it," and the exponents of the forward policy, while admitting that in the event of a hearty co-operation between the British forces and the mountaineer guerillas there was little to fear, emphatically affirmed that against a Russo-Afghan alliance the existing boundary was strategically weak.

"When the responsibility for the defence of the North-West Frontier devolved on me as Commander-in-Chief in India," said Lord Roberts, "I never contemplated any defence being possible along the frontier, as marked on our maps by a thin red line—the haphazard frontier inherited by us from the Sikhs—which did well enough so long as we had only to guard against tribal depredations, a frontier more than one thousand miles in length, with a belt of huge mountains in its front, inhabited by thousands of warlike men, over whom neither we nor any other Power had control, and with a wide, impassable river in its rear, seemed to me then, as it does now, an impossible frontier, and one on which no scheme for the defence of India could be safely based."

Many admirers of the policy of "masterly inactivity"¹ were undoubtedly enamoured of the "inactivity" and misunderstood the "masterly," and in essentials they were separated by a wider gulf from their great master than were some of the experts of the opposing school, who did not attempt to deny that their policy called for men of exceptional influence and of infinite tact, and that—risky in the hands of officials of average ability—in those of incompetents it was doomed to disastrous failure. On the other hand Sandeman's theory also received the warm support of many who failed completely to understand it. As a policy of aggression it was welcomed by all who held

¹ The phrase applied to Lawrence's frontier policy by the *Edinburgh Review*, January 1867.

the opinion that what is good for the Englishman must be better for the "nigger," that Oriental distaste for Western civilisation should be ignored, and that the stubborn barbarian who fails to appreciate the blessings of enlightened government should, for his own good, be converted by force.

In spite of Russia's assurance in 1872 that the "Imperial Cabinet continues to consider Afghanistan as entirely beyond its sphere of action," Russian agents were in constant communication with Shere Ali and were received by him in Kabul as honoured guests. The amir's bearing towards Russia at this time was largely influenced by pique and by resentment against England, to whose arbitration he had without hesitation submitted his dispute with Persia, confident in the political sagacity of "the friend of his friends and enemy of his enemies." But the decision had been given in favour of Persia, and the victim of misplaced confidence resolved to punish the offender by entering into a flirtation with the Russian suitor. The Russian, being much nearer to the Oriental in temperament, and having fewer prejudices than the Englishman, assimilates with the Asiatic while his rival stands aloof, and the growing influence of Russia was seen in the estrangement of Shere Ali from his British ally. Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, renewed the attempts to persuade him to receive an English mission, but without success, and to crown all a Russian mission was welcomed at Kabul. Hereupon the Viceroy insisted that England could not be denied similar treatment, and warned the amir that a mission would be sent and that its favourable reception would be expected.

It is doubtful if Lord Lytton had grounds for any such expectation, but he certainly placed in charge the one man who might have wrung success out of so desperate an enterprise. The reasons which influenced his choice of

Sir Neville Chamberlain were these: he was the best man for the purpose; he knew the frontier and was respected by the Afghans; he was held in honour by all men; and he was known to be a firm friend of Lord Lawrence. General Chamberlain consented to go, and the mission prepared to push through the Khyber escorted by the Guides Cavalry and the Afridi tribesmen. As the amir had vouchsafed no reply there was good reason to believe that the mission would be stopped, so, in order to lessen the effect of such a blow to England's dignity, Major Cavagnari rode forward to Ali Musjid, the Afghan outpost at the far end of the Khyber, and was there turned back, the Afghan officer stating courteously but firmly that his orders were to prevent the passage of the mission by force if necessary.

The affront was a serious one and Lord Lytton demanded an apology and an assurance that his envoy would be received, and meanwhile the Afridis of the Khyber informed Sir Neville that England would not dare to take any further steps, and that for the friendliness shown to him *they* would be left to bear the brunt of the amir's wrath.

Lord Lawrence had been watching the trend of events with grave concern. Whatever may have been his opinion of the forward policy as a theory he was convinced that in practice it must break down, since too much depended on a supply of ideally-perfect officials. He also considered that Lord Lytton and some of his advisers in India and at home were not conspicuous for the possession of the necessary attributes of exceptional experience, insight, and tact; that there was much to be said on the side of the amir, who had been disturbed and irritated by spasmodic and officious interference. So in spite of the dissuasion of his friends, who feared that he was not strong enough to endure the worry and vexation of a controversy that was all too likely to become acrimonious, he once more

stepped into the arena in the hope of preventing the outbreak of a costly and hate-engendering war.

His first letter to *The Times* asked the nation to consider whether, even though the amir had indeed insulted England's representatives, the larger share of the fault must not be attributed to those who had tried to force the mission upon him. "It appears to me," he wrote, "contrary to sound policy that we should resent our disappointment by force of arms; for, by so doing, we play the enemy's game and force the Afghans into a union with the Russians." The reason of the amir's sullen, suspicious bearing towards the Government was not far to seek. It was this: "We appear to think that we can, in short, force our policy on them without their taking offence at such conduct. . . . Have not the Afghans a right to resist our forcing a Mission on them, bearing in mind to what such Missions often lead, and what Burnes' Mission in 1836 did actually bring upon them." Admitting the serious nature of the rebuff, he gave his opinion that "if we promise to give up forcing a Mission on him he would make any apology that we could reasonably call for. I urge that we were wrong, in the outset, in our policy towards the Amir in many instances which could be pointed out, and therefore, ought not to be over hard on him in accepting his excuses. I insist that there will be no real dishonour to us in coming to terms with him; whereas, by pressing on him our own policy, we may incur most serious difficulties and even disasters," and the prosecution of such a war "would utterly ruin the finances of India."

In another letter he pleaded for delay, for, "should we, in the end, find that we were much to blame in the course we had pursued, we shall then feel that we have done a great wrong which it will be impossible to repair."

His letters and his efforts as chairman of an influential committee formed to guide public opinion in the way of

patience, had more influence upon the people than upon the Government of the country, and, no apology having been received from the amir, three columns were mobilised and Afghanistan was invaded with a promptness that has usually been conspicuously absent when the need for haste has been more apparent. It was then found that Lord Lawrence had not exaggerated the difficulties and the cost, and though the brilliance of General Roberts' campaigns and his masterly rule in Kabul saved England from the military disgrace and loss of prestige that attended the First Afghan War, there were few men of weight to be found that did not regret that the plea for patience had been unavailing.

Lord Lawrence did not live to see the end. His last public act, on June 19, 1879, was to take part in a House of Lords debate on Indian finance. He was suffering from a severe cold at the time, but as he believed that certain of the Budget proposals would, if passed, inflict hardship upon the operatives and peasants of India, he considered the call imperative. He made his protest, but, shaken by illness and fatigue, he broke down in his carefully prepared speech, and, a few days later, on June 26, 1879, John Lawrence died.

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